



Pretty Boys on Display: New Sculpture, Visual Culture, and the Role of the Female Gaze in John William Waterhouse's Paintings

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Pretty Boys on Display: New Sculpture, Visual Culture, and the Role of the Female Gaze
in John William Waterhouse's Paintings

Jennifer Bates-Ehlert

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Abstract

This thesis examines how three works by British painter John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), *Hylas and the Nymphs* (1896) (Manchester City Art Gallery), *The Awakening of Adonis* (1900) (private collection) and *Echo and Narcissus* (1903) (Walker Art Gallery) can be read as reactions to the increasing role of the male body as spectacle in nineteenth-century visual culture. The thesis is particularly concerned with the idea of the female gaze and how the women in these paintings view the male as objects. Waterhouse, who painted mainly under the auspices of the conservative Royal Academy of Art in London from 1871 until his death in 1917, is best known for paintings of mystical women. However, after 1890, he turned to Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and other Greek/Roman writings as inspiration. The three paintings listed above reflect this change, depicting Greek myths about adolescent boys whose beauty decides their destinies. They also reflect a change in style, as the figures lose their heavy dresses and togas and gain loose fitting draperies that both hide and accent the body. The male figure becomes prominent in these works, and the female takes on the role of voyeur. This thesis studies how these changes coincide with the art movement New Sculpture and the men's fitness trend Physical Culture, which trained men to emulate Greek sculpture. These two trends, like the Waterhouse works under discussion, focus on iconic male beauty as a symbol of excellence.

Additionally, this thesis focuses on popular entertainments such as Toga-Plays, Living Pictures, and Physical Culture, or body building demonstrations, which display the male as entertainment for a growing female market. Coincidentally, the rise of the matinée idol occurs during this era and demonstrates Victorian and Edwardian society's fascination with the male body on display, a fascination possibly portrayed by Waterhouse in these paintings. As current scholarship on Waterhouse demonstrates, Waterhouse was aware of, and painted, social and political movements or ideas in subtle ways. This thesis continues this discussion by promoting the theory that these later paintings can be posited as a reaction to the rise of the female as voyeur and the emergence of the male body as a source of entertainment.

Dedication

For my mother, Betty Deneen Bates

For my father, John Benjamin Bates

and

For my husband, Douglas Craig Ehlert

Acknowledgments

In the words of Lulu, “How do you thank someone who has taken you from crayons to perfume?”

To Dr. Liana Cheney, who saw my abilities and challenged me to pursue an education when I believed I had little to offer. I thank you for your friendship and constant support of my education and career.

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To my family. I love you all. I admire you all. I am honored to be your sibling.

To Jennie, always there, my BFF and Gemini Twin.

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Chapter I

Introduction

From December 2008 to May 2009 the Groninger Museum held the largest retrospective of the work of British artist John William Waterhouse (1849-1917).

“Enchanted by Women,” reaffirmed Waterhouse’s position as a painter of women.

Waterhouse biographers and scholars concur on this point. His paintings dedicated to the power, mystique, frailty, danger and beauty of the female form demonstrate the Victorian predilection for revering and fearing the feminine. Often categorized as a Pre-Raphaelite or a Classical painter, Waterhouse was enamored with femme fatales, tragic damsels, martyred saints and powerful enchantresses. Bewitching women in elegant dresses, belts, and exquisite fabrics are hallmarks of his work. Scholars, looking for new meanings and influences in his work, such as Symbolist themes, occultism, and French Realism, still focus on the women in Waterhouse's paintings and overlooking the importance of his male figures.

Art historian Anthony Hobson, who wrote the first Waterhouse biography, observes, “The men are few, and might be described as sex objects if they were not so passive or helpless” (*Art and Life* 75). Nonetheless, the men in Waterhouse’s art warrant scholarly attention and their time is due. My thesis builds on Professor Simon Goldhill’s article, “The Art of Reception: J.W. Waterhouse and the Painting of Desire in Victorian Britain” in which he recognizes the significance of the male subject in Waterhouse's

paintings. He writes, “His [Waterhouse’s] classical pictures in particular show a fascinating engagement with the position of the male subject of desire, which has been largely ignored in the scant discussions of his work.” (143). Goldhill’s article focuses on the Victorian reception of Waterhouse’s paintings and examines the allure and malevolence of the nymphs in Waterhouse’s *Hylas and the Nymphs* and pays less attention to the figure of Hylas and its meaning or influences, but his ideas on Hylas’ appeal and the nymphs obvious desire form a base for my argument.

Waterhouse’s preference for pale-skinned girls and women with rosy cheeks and auburn hair is well known. They are usually called the “Waterhouse Girl.” But is there a “Waterhouse Boy?” Based on German philosopher Johann Winckelmann’s (1717-1768) influential writings on art, which were highly revered in Waterhouse’s time, I use Alex Potts’s *Flesh and the Ideal*, to establish two “Waterhouse Boy” types. One is the dark-featured type who inhabits the earthly realm and the other is the lighter, more feminine type reserved for gods and other heavenly beings. The more we learn about the men in Waterhouse’s paintings, the more we understand his aesthetic, and the complex gender dynamics at play, the more we know of Waterhouse.

This thesis also aligns with Joseph Kestner’s work in *Mythology and Misogyny*, which discusses nineteenth-century classical painters such as Waterhouse and how they used Greek and Roman mythology to symbolize current nineteenth-century issues, usually the changing role of women. Kestner argues:

Such painting was a powerful expression of male attitudes about women and their condition. In a period of political and legal transition for women, classical-subject painting was a conservative, frequently reactionary force in the process of women’s gradual change of status (3).

Centering on three paintings, *Hylas and the Nymphs* (1896), *The Awakening of Adonis* (1899), and *Echo and Narcissus* (1903) when Waterhouse veered away from the influence of John Everett Millais (1829-1896) and the Pre-Raphaelites and turned to myths containing the theme of male beauty contrasted against female desire. This thesis examines the shift that occurred in Waterhouse's work after 1891, in which Hylas and other semi-nude male figures begin to appear, and how they could be seen to reflect specific social and artistic trends. What prompted Waterhouse to move away, even for just a short time, from the heavily robed men or knights in shining armor to paint youthful beauties (male and female) barely draped and unashamed or unaware of their nudity and sexuality?

The answer might reside in the influence of New Sculpture, an art movement that blossomed in the 1880s and 1890s under the auspices of London's Royal Academy of Art's president, and Waterhouse colleague, Frederic Leighton (1830-1896). Although he was primarily a painter of classical subjects, Leighton's sculpture *An Athlete Wrestling With A Python* (1877), considered one of the founding artworks of New Sculpture, emphasized the male form and sparked a great deal of change at the Royal Academy where Waterhouse studied and exhibited from 1871 until 1917. Waterhouse enrolled as a sculpting student in 1871 and switched to painting in 1872.

Waterhouse biographer Peter Trippi noted in his 2004 *J.W. Waterhouse* that sculpture played a very important role in Waterhouse's development:

Waterhouse's experience in sculpture partly explains his lifelong competence in, and commitment to, painting the body as a palpable form. Mysteriously, in 1891, almost twenty years after he left the Schools, he describes himself as both a painter and 'sculptist' (sic) (18).

Trippi remarks on the connections between Waterhouse and New Sculpture, saying, “A sculptor himself, Waterhouse knew many New Sculptors, whose idealized images of women in contemplation often bore Symbolist undercurrents” (151). Following Trippi’s lead, this thesis posits that Waterhouse aligned himself with New Sculpture artists. Former Tate curator Robert Upstone’s book, *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones & Watts: Symbolism in Britain 1860-1910* proves invaluable in connecting the New Sculpture artists with their painter peers. But its focus is on the legacy of Edward Burne-Jones and G.F. Watts. Waterhouse’s work, often compared to Burne-Jones’s, is not mentioned in Upstone’s text. My comparison of Waterhouse’s works to those of New Sculptors Albert Toft and Harry Bates establishes formal connections between Waterhouse and New Sculpture. More importantly, these connections align Waterhouse to the Symbolist movement, demonstrating Waterhouse’s openness to current ideas.

Waterhouse’s contemporary, the art writer A.L. Baldry, remarked on the current feel of Waterhouse’s work commenting that he was “certainly not one of those men who turn their backs on the spirit of the time” (“Some Recent Work” 176) and, “The modern feeling is evident enough in his work, but is an intellectual modernity that he professes” (176). With this in mind, Waterhouse’s paintings, full of imagination, myth, and fantasy, struck a modern chord with his audience, along with a willingness to explore modern thought.

The work of art history professor and British art scholar Michael Hatt demonstrates how New Sculpture, in an era when the female figure dominated art, sought to return the male form to its iconic state as the embodiment of human excellence. Because of its long-established tradition as the icon of truth and beauty, Victorians

accepted this male nudity. Hatt's work stresses the role of the male nude as an uplifting moral force in Britain. It was also an art form that brought emphasis to the decorative arts. Small statuettes of popular sculptures, like Leighton's *The Sluggard*, were manufactured for the home.

Relating Waterhouse's men, who are continually physically and/or emotionally weak to the masculine types of New Sculpture, has its challenges. The concepts of male beauty are similar as they both deal with sculptural concerns and present the ideal male figure in a classical and imaginative way. The influence of New Sculpture, with its focus on the ideal male form, can be seen in Waterhouse's emphasis on the iconic beauty of the youthful boy, though their actions lack a sense of heroism found throughout New Sculpture.

Joseph Kestner's framework of masculine archetypes in *Masculinities in Victorian Art* facilitates my argument that Waterhouse's *Hylas and the Nymphs*, *Awakening of Adonis*, and *Echo and Narcissus* symbolize the eroticism of the adolescent male but lack Victorian masculinity. These archetypes such as "the mythical hero" and "the diligent labourer" develop what artists perceived as the Victorian ideal. I discuss these types in relation to Waterhouse's works and whether his art reflects or challenges these ideals because even though they do not fit the criteria of Victorian masculinity, these young men are desirable in the gaze of women.

The female gaze is an integral part of my discussion. In the Waterhouse paintings male figures are watched by female figures. In the three works, the gaze arrests the action and predicts the future, and all three gazes are different. In *Hylas and the Nymphs*, the gaze is shared. Hylas, though he is in profile, meets the gaze of the nymphs. This reduces

Hylas' role as a victim and creates sexual tension. The opposite occurs in *Echo and Narcissus*. Echo looks at Narcissus, her body exposed, highlighting her beauty and sexuality for the viewer. Narcissus entralls Echo. For Narcissus, his view is reduced to a hopeless obsession with a watery reflection of himself. Both Echo and Narcissus, so enchanted by the same image of male perfection, lose touch with the physical world and simply fade away. Thirdly is the scopophilic gaze of Aphrodite. In *The Awakening of Adonis*, the goddess Aphrodite hovers over a sleeping Adonis. As in *Echo*, the gaze is not returned. Aphrodite relishes the male figure, almost fetishizing him. The unifying factor for all three is the notion that women indeed look or "gaze" at men.

The term "female gaze" stems from the "male gaze" of feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey's seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." Her essay defines mainstream film as "A world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly" (364). Mulvey's theory of the gaze has been widely applied by art historians. The female gaze has to do with how women actively look, with the potential objectification of the male. We know Waterhouse's intended audience was largely well-to-do, conservative white males. Their gaze is not all that crucial. The question, "what if the paintings were read from the view of the female protagonist?" is the crux of the issue.

My work emphasizes the gaze of Waterhouse's three female protagonists, the nymphs, Aphrodite, and Echo, assessing what they are viewing and how each female gaze relates to the iconography, the myth, and the male subject. My exploration of the female gaze extends to the increasing spectatorship by women of the male form during

Waterhouse's lifetime. In Waterhouse's painterly world it seems that women are as voyeuristic as men. Waterhouse's paintings *Hylas and the Nymphs*, *Echo and Narcissus*, and *The Awakening of Adonis* question the accepted role of the female as a non-viewer.

In these paintings, it is the fleeting beauty of the young male that is on display—the pretty boy. This type of male, as feminist art historian Abigail Solomon-Godeau stresses in *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation* has always been an object of desire. She writes, “that the image of desire was principally drawn from the ephebic ranks” (144). Feminist writer Germaine Greer's book *Beautiful Boy*, which seeks “to advance women's reclamation of their capacity and right to visual pleasure,” (1) focuses solely on the appeal of the youthful male throughout art history. In chapters with titles such as “The Icon of Male Vulnerability,” “The Passive Love Object” and “The Female Gaze” Greer's book establishes a framework for the erotic appeal of these art historical types to women. Waterhouse's graceful boys evoke the iconic beauty of the classical past with the contemporary twist of the female gaze and the idea of male sexual objectification. It is a switch in the perceived gender roles of voyeurism.

The issue of the gender is central to my thesis. I take a feminist approach in my argument that the female gaze on the male body has been overlooked by scholars and is worthy of serious consideration. To aid in this argument I turn to Abigail Solomon-Godeau who posits that film theorist E. Ann Kaplan's question “‘Is the gaze male’ has the unintended consequences of implying that gendered dynamics of looking are reducible to relations of empowered male subject and disempowered female ones” (9). I stress that Waterhouse's works display an empowered female gaze, though not in a positive light. As we look at Waterhouse's mythical paintings of young, beautiful boys,

who have no function other than to display their youth and looks, the viewer is confronted with themes of sexual desire and the male as a sex object. Clearly, his female figures are objects of desire for Waterhouse's intended audience, but only exquisite male beauty incites lust, not female. The boy on display enraptures the female turning him into the object of her fantasy.

The fact that these women enjoy the male form, contradicts cultural historian Stephen Kerns statement in *Eyes of Love: The Gaze in English and French Paintings and Novels*, that:

In most images of the sexes together, the man's eyes is more sharply focused than the woman's look, but the woman's look reveals equal, if not greater, measure of subjectivity. The woman's eyes are just not as intense in looking at a desirable man, as the man's eyes are intent on looking at a desirable woman. (14)

Kerns's discussion about the eyes of the female in Victorian art helps to demonstrate the uniqueness of these works. The females do not avert their eyes or behave in the way Kerns argues. The placid, almost confronting stares (particularly the nymphs) in Waterhouse's paintings defy Kerns' description of women in French and English art of the second half on the nineteenth century. The three Waterhouse paintings reject the Victorian mindset that women do not look at men for pleasure.

Waterhouse's paintings, if read as a commentary on the power and rise of the female gaze, are almost subversive. Feminist author Margaret Walters relates, "Women, with their modesty and delicate sensibilities and higher moral standards, are not interested in looking at the male body – so the nineteenth century myth ran" (16). And her comment "so the nineteenth-century myth ran" is key. Victorian women did look. This is evidenced by the increase in female attendance at exhibitions, the theater, music

halls, and in the proliferation of photographs and other ephemera of popular male figures. The Matinée Idol and his ardent follower the Matinée Girl are another important example of how women (or girls) delighted in a man's appearance and objectified him.

In his article "Masculine Appearances: Male Physicality on the Late Victorian Stage," theatre scholar David Haldane-Lawrence explains that in the domain of the performing arts, "it was women in the audience who were largely responsible for the deification of the late nineteenth-century leading man. Female adulation of the male actor led to more emphasis being placed on masculine physical appearance than earlier in the century" (50). Women's emancipation provided women more liberty to attend exhibits or go to the theater and meant that women had more visual access than ever to the male, not only as a work of art, but also as an object of desire, in a variety of arenas.

One such arena, the exercise trend around Physical Culture, gave women the opportunity to gape at the nearly-nude bodies of young men, lead by the charismatic performer Eugen Sandow, who tried their best to imitate Greek Sculpture. Blurring the lines between art and performance, the movement is closely tied with New Sculpture and its emphasis on the male form. It is not surprising that New Sculptor Frederick William Pomeroy sculpted Eugen Sandow's likeness. Sandow's form was so revered that the British Museum commissioned a plaster cast of his body. Physical Culture enthusiasts often posed for souvenir photographs. These images sold well. Sandow biographer David L. Chapman recounts French author Paul Bourget's (1852-1935) reaction to Sandow's presence in the bedrooms of many Victorian women, "There among the golden gewgaws that covered every available countertop, he found images of Eugen Sandow . . . and Sandow was portrayed in a distinctly un-Victorian state of nudity" (*Adonis* 1).

Waterhouse, as Kestner suggests, knew of the changes in gender roles, and encompassed this in his art.

Of course, due to the lack of private letters and papers, it is impossible to say exactly what Waterhouse meant his paintings to convey, if anything. But it is not unheard of to examine Waterhouse's works in their cultural context. Waterhouse and Pre-Raphaelite scholar Elizabeth Prettejohn posits:

But his paintings clearly demonstrate that he was alive to the exciting new developments of the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries in archeology, anthropology, comparative mythology, the study of ancient modern religions, occultism, and the revival of paganism (23).

Current writings such as *JW Waterhouse: A Modern Pre-Raphaelite* still emphasize the importance of the female. Essays such as Patty Wageman's "Dreams or Reality: Waterhouse's Women and Symbolism" and Elizabeth Prettejohn's "Waterhouse's Imagination," however excellent and beneficial to Waterhouse's scholarship, nonetheless examine his work through same lens that Hobson constructed in his 1980 biography: the lens of Waterhouse as a painter of women. A thorough examination of the men in Waterhouse's paintings adds a level of gender and social complexity to our understanding of his work.

Overall, my thesis examines Waterhouse's work and its relationship to the New Sculpture, Symbolism, and the rise of the *matinée* girl. I posit that Waterhouse's art can be related to concerns over the changing role of the male figure and engages themes of male beauty in a way that reflects the emerging trend of the male figure as spectacle in late Victorian and early Edwardian culture to demonstrate that the female gaze was a powerful one that could emanate lust and objectify a person as well as any man's.

Chapter II

The Waterhouse Boy

One goal of this thesis is to challenge biographer Anthony Hobson's statement "The men are few, and might be described as sex objects if they were not so passive or helpless" (*Waterhouse R.A.* 75) to demonstrate that Waterhouse's male figures, though considered to be weak in act and character, do become objects of sexual desire in his post-1890s work, that may have been influenced by social and artistic trend of the late nineteenth-century. The social trends, primarily Physical Culture and the beginnings of the male matinee idol, are visual movements that displayed the body as a source of entertainment. The artistic movement of New Sculpture celebrated the male as a source of artistic supremacy. Waterhouse's later work can be viewed as a synthesis of the two. But, in order to understand how the post-1890 paintings differed, at least visually, from his prior work, some time must be dedicated to Waterhouse's earlier paintings that contain male figures and examine how these formed a basis for Waterhouse's style and define his "Waterhouse Boy."

Background and Early Works

Waterhouse learned his craft from his father William Waterhouse, a moderately successful painter. John William Waterhouse was born in 1849 in Rome where his father painted Italian landscapes, copies of Old Masters, and other works to please the tourist trade. William Waterhouse also delved into Roman history paintings. William Waterhouse seemed to have a taste for Roman history, a taste his son would inherit and

cultivate his entire life. “Nino,” as John was called by his family enjoyed stories of Roman soldiers and other glorious tales. Despite a love for Italy and its art, in 1854 the Waterhouse family moved back to London where J.W. Waterhouse attended school, and gained a solid background in the classics. Waterhouse never forgot his love for the myths or his earlier years in Italy. Art critic J.A.Blaikie, one of Waterhouse’s earliest supporters, recounts, “As a boy he was wont to express to his school-fellows the most perfect confidence in the Roman soldiers, and was sure they were equal to thrashing any fabulous number of moderns” (2). His biographers, such as Rose Sketchley, have long discussed Waterhouse’s knowledge and love of the classics, relating, as Sketchley does, “That sense of partly belonging to Rome made ancient history very stirring, and among school books *Smith’s Classical Dictionary* was singled out as stories to be read for pleasure again and again” (2).

It is not surprising then that one of Waterhouse’s first known works (most likely painted under the tutelage of his father) would be a Roman scene of glory. *The Death of Cocles* (1869) (Figure 1) represents the Roman hero Horatio Cocles, a farmer turned soldier, who saved Rome from invaders. Immortalized in the narrative poem *Horatius at the Bridge*, by Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859), Cocles’ story was well-known and seemed the perfect subject matter for a young man brought up loving Rome and its history. Although Italy’s beauty would remain Waterhouse’s muse, her heroic stories would not.

Waterhouse, who officially entered London’s Royal Academy in 1871, as a “Probationer in the Sculpture School” (Hobson, *JW Waterhouse* 12), eventually switched to paint under the guidance of Frederick Richard Pickersgill, RA (1820-1900). Pickersgill

was an Academy painter who favored images of the Mediterranean and exotic (in nineteenth-century terms) peasants and locales. Waterhouse seemed perfectly suited to paint historic scenes of Roman glory and bravado, continuing the sumptuous, classically themed styles of Academy luminaries Lawrence Alma-Tadema and then President Frederic Leighton. But, he did not, preferring to depict men in various modes of ineffectiveness. Whether morose, idle, asleep, or infatuated, Waterhouse's male characters lack bravado. For his first exhibit at the Royal Academy, Waterhouse chose an allegorical subject, depicting two young boys as *Sleep and His Half-Brother Death* (1874) (Figure 2).

This image is a poignant one, because it may represent Waterhouse's younger brothers who died from tuberculosis. The dimly lit interior is dramatically presented. A drawn bedside curtain reveals two columns supporting what appears to be a balcony. A brazier billows smoke, and two young men rest on the bed. Sleep, painted in a golden light, leans on his brother Death, an allusion, to past representations of the gods Thanatos (Death) and Hypnos (Sleep), where Thanatos often carries Hypnos. Sleep holds the symbolic poppy, an attribute of Hypnos, and Death reclines in the shadows. Their prone body positions, recall ancient tombs or sarcophagi, such as *The Tomb of Dying Adonis* and the *Endymion* sarcophagus. Waterhouse spent many afternoons at the South Kensington Museums and the British Museum, and was familiar with Greek and Roman statuary, through his own research and his studies at The Academy.

Feasibly, Waterhouse referred to the Roman *Endymion on Mt Latmos* (Figure 3) as a source for the figures. The prone body position and the crossing of the legs of Sleep recall Endymion's features. To support this theory it is known that Waterhouse turned to

the Roman *Endymion* later in his career when he painted *The Awakening of Adonis*.

Many writers have said that Waterhouse engaged the same idea, image, or theme over and over again in his art. Conceivably, his admiration for the *Endymion* began earlier than 1900 utilizing it for his *Sleep and his Half Brother Death* and later for *Adonis*. The importance of this is that it establishes an interest sculpture, as well as an interest in the doomed, young males of Greek Mythology.

Despite its somber title, the painting could be viewed as musicians or revelers napping after a dance or party (Blaikie, "J.W. Waterhouse" 3). The use of the curtain, the balcony, and the inclusion of two ancient instruments, the aulus and the lyre, indicate performance. The instruments, although associated with Greek and Roman myths and festivals, have very little to do with the allegory of Sleep and Death. Of course, Waterhouse, still a student, and not yet an Associate of the Academy, may have been trying to impress his audience with his classical knowledge. Hobson posits, "However, his earliest works show the contrivance, the seeking of the picturesque and the exotic subject, which might be fairly expected of the young enthusiast" (*Life and Art* 25). Thirdly, the painting is about beauty: a beauty that is both masculine and feminine.

Peter Trippi, in the biography *JW Waterhouse*, observes Waterhouse's use of feminine and masculine features in *Sleep and his Half Brother Death*. He writes:

These faces constitute Waterhouse's response to the features favored by Simeon Solomon (1840-1905), who had created a male equivalent for the sensualized female 'stunners' of his master, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82). Waterhouse sustained this ambiguity by sketching his boys from a female model (29).

The Masculine/Feminine Ideal

A page from one of Waterhouse's sketchbooks (Figure 4) appears to be a preliminary sketch for the visage of Sleep and lists a female as the model. This idea of duality sets up the kind of beauty reserved for male gods or other immortals; a beauty that combines the male physique with a female face, and light or red hair. Art historian Jongwoo Jeremy Kim discusses this duality in the book *Painted Men in Britain*, commenting that these type of images relate to Johan Winckelmann's discussions on Proitelan sculpture who writes that such excellence combines "the forms of prolonged youth in the female sex with the masculine forms of a beautiful young man" (2). Additionally Kim theorizes that Walter Pater's statement, "marmoreal forms commanded sexless beauty,' [means] not without a sex but of both sexes, and thus beyond the binary sexual division" (4). Kim, who is discussing Henry Scott Tuke's *The Woodland Bather* (1893), explains that such heroes, in Pater's view, "transcend all sexual bounds" (2) creating an ideal beauty.

Alex Potts argues that Winckelmann's ideal beauty relies on contours and radical differences, writing, "His [Winckelmann's] analysis implies that the fantasy of absolute oneness could best be represented by way of a radical paradox" (155). This type of beauty, one that combines two differing forms, male and female, or hard and soft, may explain why Waterhouse's male gods have muscular bodies with full, delicate faces, and light hair. They are different from his earthly males, who are always dark with angular features. This thesis explores that Waterhouse used this artistic device for his depictions of *Adonis* (1900) (Figure 5) and *Apollo* (1908) (Figure 6). Adonis's rosy, round face, enhanced by flowing red hair are traits widely associated with the "Waterhouse Girl."

The same look is seen in Waterhouse's *Apollo and Daphne*. Again, a Greek God bears the attributes of Waterhouse's females; auburn locks, rounded, full features, and high color in the cheeks. In *The Annunciation* (1914) (Figure 7) the angel Gabriel, draped in purple, carries the symbolic Lily to Mary. Like Adonis, Gabriel appears more feminine than masculine. His titian locks billow in the wind, accentuating the angel's womanly features. Waterhouse certainly has an ideal beauty, one that scholars have long seen in his female subjects, if not his males. Waterhouse scholar Bolton Marvick views the "Waterhouse Girl" as two distinct types, arguing, "Two primary female types appear in Waterhouse's work in different roles: a pallid, quietly supplicating adolescent, and a darker, more knowing and more conventional *fin-de-siecle* seductress" ("Herself A Psyche" 84-86).

I argue that Waterhouse defines his male subjects into two types as well, allegorical and god-like or earthly and dark, suffering in spirit. The heavenly beauty is of an elevated sphere, more beautiful than manly and combines the bodily form of a Greek sculpture with the winsome, English Rose visage of the Pre-Raphaelite female. His earthly males are not as light. A darkness tends to surround them, usually a half shadow, or vague light. Looking again at *Sleep and his Half-Brother Death*, we encounter these types. Sleep, lit in gold, with tousled, titian curls and pink cheeks is Waterhouse's heavenly beauty. Death who lies in dusky light, has darker features, appears less relaxed (note the clenched fist). Since death is the great shadow that follows all men, and renders everyone useless, it could be the prototype for Waterhouse's "ineffectual male." JKestner notes, "The picture [*Sleep and His Half Brother Death*] anticipates the eventual weakness of men in many of Waterhouse's canvases of the 1880s and later" (*Mythology* 29). *A Sick*

Child Brought into the Temple of Aesculapius, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1877, continues the development of this theme of the weak male, which becomes a leitmotif throughout Waterhouse's canon.

The Ineffectual Male

A Sick Child Brought into the Temple of Aesculapius (1877) (Figure 8) depicts a frail young girl and her family observing rituals at a temple. Aesculapius, the Greek and Roman god of healing is represented in the upper right hand corner. Waterhouse has cropped the statue of the god to just the lower portion. This invites the viewer to contemplate on the scene of the family and the temple's priest, who is dressed in a white himation, loosely draped, and has one shoulder bared. In this way, the priest takes on the garments of the god, based on Greek and Roman sculpture. The healer also holds a kylix, similar in shape to the Bowl of Hygieia, another attribute of Aesculapius. Waterhouse does not include the snake, which usually coils around the bowl. The elements of the temple's ritual are evident. Greek historian, Walter Burkert, explains the ceremony in the book *Greek Religion*, as, "garlanded with bay the sick person sacrifices an animal to Apollo, as well as cakes garlanded with olive twigs to various other gods" (268). In the painting, the sick child is "garlanded with bay" and offers a sacrifice of laurel to the god. Too feeble to make the sacrifice, the girl's mother supports her arm. Other figures include an older sister, entwining bay leaves, and a brother and father who look on, uncertain of what to do. In the back, tousled fabric on a marble plinth may indicate that the child has been sleeping there, as ritual dictates, or possibly a death shroud. The inclusion of an animal skin, baskets of olives, flowers, and vegetables, and a smoky, brazier, indicate all the rituals have been observed but the child remains unwell.

However, one reviewer expressed a happy ending, exclaiming “Votive offerings are being made to the statue of the god on behalf of a little girl whose case we feel happy in being her appearance to give a favourable prognosis” (“Royal Academy of Arts,” *The Lancet* 665). But, the hesitant expressions, somber mood, and the crown of bay, a symbol of illness, say otherwise. The priest, a gaunt figure, with heavy eyes, sunken cheeks, and a five o’clock shadow appears unable to heal the child. The male figures, such as the father and son, who observe without activity, are useless, unlike the women, who are involved with the task at hand. Waterhouse’s paradigm of the active female and the passive male opposes John Ruskin’s lecture that the male is the doer and the female is reliant upon his actions, “The man’s power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender” (48). Waterhouse plays with gender norms, giving the females positive activity while the men seem at a loss.

Another reason this painting is key because it introduces us to Waterhouse’s first concept of the earthly male. A likeness of the priest’s figure will be repeated throughout Waterhouse’s works. It is the beginning of his “earthly ideal” later realized in *Hylas and the Nymphs* and *Echo and Narcissus*. Unlike the charming youths of *Sleep and his Half-Brother*, or the pretty boy *Adonis* of 1900, who embody an ideal beauty reserved for gods and allegory, the priest represents the type of human male Waterhouse would continue to represent; handsome, and graceful with a lean physique. The features of the priest, especially the prominent hollow of the cheekbones and dark features remain a visual constant in Waterhouse’s canon. Waterhouse’s figures retain a similarity, not uncommon in nineteenth-century art. Trippi comments that Waterhouse’s use of repetitive figures is, “Perpetuating an Academic tradition promoted by Reynolds, Waterhouse transcended the

particularities of individual models to present his own idealized, instantly recognized type” (*Waterhouse* 104).

This early representation of Waterhouse’s male ideal coincides remarkably well with the career of the model Angelo Colarossi, an Italian who came to England expressly to model. An interview, titled “Angelo Colarossi,” published in 1896 by *The Beam*, provides a look at the career of Colarossi. An article, published by the Students of National Art Training School, seems to be quite a find, as I have not found it any bibliographies or indexes. It is a treat to read. Colarossi, a popular and prolific model, tells first hand of working with London’s top artists, such as John Gibson, Edward Poynter, Edward Burne-Jones, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (to name a few).

“Colarossi’s career began in Paris, sitting for “Gêrome, Boulanger, Carôt, Laurens and others, and then in 1864, crossed to England” (Fisher 73). Colarossi goes on to boast that he was “the first professional Italian model in England” (74). He sat for the Royal Academy in 1865, becoming Leighton’s model of choice. Colarossi, posed for several of Leighton’s works such as *Hercules Wrestling With Death For The Body of Alcestis* (1870) and *The Sea Gives Up Its Dead, Which Were In It* (1877). In all these works, Colarossi’s impressive physicality is evident. Later it is heightened in the dynamic, hyper-idealized realism of Leighton’s sculpture, *Athlete Wrestling a Python*. Colarossi’s figure and strength inspired many Royal Academy artists, possibly including Waterhouse.

Waterhouse’s *Asclepius* and Leighton’s *Athlete* were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1877, feasibly Colarossi modeled for both. Research done by scholar Scott Thomas Buckle, for his online article “A Waterhouse Sketch Discovered” found a formal

connection between the two men, locating Colarossi's contact information in one of Waterhouse's sketchbooks. Buckle posits:

The sketchbook, which contains Colarossi's name and address, appears to date from early on in Waterhouse's career, as most of the sketches contained within are related to themes and objects of Roman antiquity. One may assume then that Colarossi would have posed for Waterhouse during his 'classical' period (np).

Buckle concludes that Colarossi modeled as one of the attendants in Waterhouse's *Honorius*, seeing his mustached figure in the back. My thought is that Colarossi is the model for Asclepius. Leighton's *And The Sea Gives Up Its Dead Which Were In It* (Figure 9) portrays a man with the same striking cheekbones, straight nose, and full mouth as Asclepius. The pronounced clavicle and chest bones are similar. But rather than focus on Colarossi's physique, Waterhouse covers his figure, portraying him as vulnerable and fatigued, unlike his Royal Academy counterparts who preferred Colarossi's vitality and power.

However, Jongwoo Kim in the book *Painted Men in Britain* argues that it is not Colarossi, but another Italian, Gaetano Valvona who modeled for Leighton's *The Sea Gives Up Its Dead* stressing that the recessed dip in the breastbone of the main figure indicates Valvona (41). I argue for Colarossi, not only is it the more accepted view but because Colarossi discusses it in the interview. But whether or not it is Colarossi does not matter. My argument that Waterhouse chose to paint these men as vulnerable and emotional rather than heroic or physical is still valid. Waterhouse created men full of vulnerability and humanity, often called "ineffectual" by art historians such as Christopher Wood and Anthony Hobson.

A third painting, *The Remorse of Nero After the Death of His Mother* (1878) (Figure 10) continues the theme of so-called weak males. As in the two prior paintings Waterhouse chose a male character that displays weakness, rather than heroic feats or romantic conquests. As the *Illustrated London News* describes:

Considerable ambition is shown in Mr. J.W. Waterhouse's *Remorse of Nero*, the groveling figure of a person in Roman costume. Mister Waterhouse's Nero is gaunt, haggard, and remorseful enough in appearance, but he looks full forty years of age. Is the artist aware the son of Ahenobarbus and Agrippa was very fat, and when he burned down Rome under thirty? ("Royal Academy Exhibition" 587).

It is clear from Roman busts that Nero was a corpulent man with a weak chin. Waterhouse portrayed him as a tragically romantic figure caught in a state of anguish. Nero is not a heroic figure, known best for killing his mother and for "fiddling while Rome burned." Waterhouse's Nero is indeed remorseful; a trait not admired in a leader, and seems more like a young boy being punished than a powerful emperor. But, despite his anti-heroic deeds, Nero remains a popular dramatic figure, especially in Racine's *Britannicus*, which has been a staple of the London stage since its translation from French into English in 1714. The play was originally performed in 1669 at The Academie Française in Paris.

A later French production of the early 1800s starred the iconic actor Jean François Talma as Nero. Eugene Delacroix painted a posthumous portrayal of Talma, (1852) (Figure 11) as Nero. Waterhouse's *Nero* seems influenced by Delacroix's. Both portray a pensive man garbed in red, crowned in laurel, wearing a signet ring on his middle finger. Both contain dramatic lighting, full of shadows and recessed space. In Delacroix's the figure is lit from below, mimicking footlights while Waterhouse's light rakes from the left, highlighting Nero's body, throwing his face into shadow. I would

also speculate that if Waterhouse was familiar with Delacroix's portrait it demonstrates knowledge of, or at least an interest in, the theater. Of course, other scholars have noted the theatricality in Waterhouse's works and this will be discussed in the following chapters. Waterhouse's Nero may not be powerful, but he certainly is dramatic and points to an interest in the theater earlier than commonly thought.

The portrayal of a diminished leader continues in Waterhouse's *The Favorites of Emperor Honorius* (Figure 12). Waterhouse portrays a physically fit male, in a position of authority, who larks about with his pet pigeons, while beleaguered attendants watch. Nero and Honorius both Roman emperors of impressive lineage should have a commanding presence but evoke moments of idleness or despair. These traits go against the perceived Victorian manliness defined by Joseph Kestner's in his book *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* as, "Central to the evolution of the male image was the Victorian ideal of manliness, as embracing qualities of physical courage, chivalric ideals, virtuous fortitude with additional connotations of military and patriotic virtue" (3). This contrast to Victorian 'manliness' remained a constant theme. To quote Christopher Wood, "These early genre and historical canvases anticipate the representations of diminished male power in Waterhouse's depictions for the rest of his life" (296).

Although these works may not tell tales of bravery and heroism, they do tell of emotion. While Nero and Honorius are not historical figures of merit (Rome burned under Nero and was sacked during Honorius's reign) Waterhouse painted a sense of stillness and feeling that pervades his work. Aesculapius represents the exhaustion and sadness one feels when faced with an impossible task. Nero shares guilt and remorse, while Honorius' ineptness and procrastination are relatable.

They are human and vulnerable, and their beauty resonates. Even if we do not know their stories we can appreciate the emotions depicted. The humanity rings true, as art critic Baldry noted, “Artistically he [Waterhouse] belonged to a world of his own creation, and he peopled this world with a type of humanity that was very rightly related to his surroundings” (“The Late J.W. Waterhouse” 4). Male vulnerability is not a deterrent for beauty or love. The knights and youthful lovers of his Pre-Raphaelite phase, which began after viewing a John Everett Millais (1828-1896) exhibit at the Academy in 1883, enchanted (and were enchanted by) any number of maidens, mermaids, and other female beings. But these works such as *The Lamia* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, are more about the Victorian notion of perfect love, explained by art historian Angus Trumble as, “by and large Victorian imagination was mostly offered myths of unfathomable love, forged sexlessly in an instant and a highly moral plane, between handsome men and beautiful women” (6). And for these works that is true. The sexuality of his later paintings is just being hinted at.

Of course, in so many of his paintings, which are laced with fantasy and sexuality, the man loses power to the female, but does that mean he is any less attractive? In a way, Waterhouse’s works question the concepts of virility and sexuality in the Victorian world. I argue that Hobson’s reduction of the male figure is based on the Ruskinian notion that a man must be active, or heroic, or manly to be considered the object of desire. The “Waterhouse Boy” with his dark, seductive looks, despite their inability to control their worlds, challenge this thought process. Even the golden, ethereal males, like Adonis, showcase defeat, while remaining attractive to the female protagonists.

Especially in his post 1890, mythic paintings, which provoke a similar desire to Michael Hatt's findings in Henry Scott Tuke's works, who writes:

Without turning to Freudian Theory, these are the themes to be pursued here: how the visual can stand in for the sexual, not as a means of provoking desire like pornography, nor as a means of simply recoding desire, but as truly vicarious, a viable erotic experience in itself ("A Great Sight" 88).

In these later paintings Waterhouse's female protagonists, do have vicarious and erotic experiences, in a not-so-Victorian way that redefines his "Boys" into "sex objects" and continues Waterhouse's reworking of Victorian artistic gender norms.

Chapter III

Male Objectification

Modern scholarship on Waterhouse, which began in 1980 with Anthony Hobson's influential monograph, has focused mainly on his female figures. This lack of scholarship may be what prompted Simon Goldhill to argue, "His [Waterhouse's] classical pictures in particular show a fascinating engagement with the position of the male subject of desire, which has been largely ignored in the scant discussions of his work" (143). Scholars commonly accept that when anyone writes of models, beauty, or nudity the subject is female. Of course, this type of assumption or generalization in nineteenth-century art remains par for the course. Abigail Solomon-Godeau explains:

So thoroughly was the nude male supplanted by the female nude in the course of the nineteenth-century and so deeply rooted the ideological shift that both attended, enabled, and naturalized this transformation, that even those contemporary scholars concerned with the significance of the nude tend automatically to assume that the referent for the aesthetic category "nude" is self evidently the female body" (44).

Waterhouse's art fits her model and his legacy as a painter of women holds true. This chapter focuses on the actions of his female protagonists and how these actions (particularly their gaze) diminish the males to objects of desire.

The Female Gaze

Art history professor Dianne MacLeod argues in her article "Pre-Raphaelite Women Collectors" that Laura Mulvey's writings on the gaze discount the idea that women can be voyeurs with the same power as male voyeurs. They too can reduce a person to a passive object. MacLeod asserts:

Such writers, as Laura Mulvey [have] argued that the masculine gaze objectifies the female image by projecting desire onto it (Mulvey 57-58). Mulvey and other guardians of the gaze, however, reject the possibility of women reversing the relationship and appropriating the gaze for themselves (43).

To support MacLeod's argument, we need only look at Waterhouse's Aphrodite who relishes Adonis while he sleeps. In *Hylas and the Nymphs* (Figure 13), young naiads stare at Hylas, with a fathomless expression. Their eyes are the key to his destruction and are where their power resides. Kern notices that in nineteenth-century art "while the eyes of male seducers in art are narrowed and shadowy, the eyes of full blown seductresses are open, luminous, and dazzling beautiful" (173). In *Echo and Narcissus* (Figure 14), Echo's gaze, does not control or seduce Narcissus, yet her desire is obvious. A nearby narcissus blossom refers to Narcissus's transformation. The reduction of a male figure, into an object as passive as a flower, speaks volumes about the power of the sexually charged gaze (even if it is his own).

Classics professor Helen Lovatt, author of *The Epic Gaze*, posits that in the Greek epic, male heroes can, "On occasion become an aesthetic object. Scattered throughout the corpus of the epic are images which evoke erotic discourse" (265). These men control neither their actions nor their destinies. They are, at least for the moment, caught in the appropriating gaze of desire, rendering them passive, and reducing them to sex objects.

If, as Kestner posits:

It has been possible to map major forms of representation of masculinity in the nineteenth century. The mythical hero, the chivalric knight, the valiant soldier, the diligent laborer constitute some of the most significant and signifying ideographs in the history of art during the period (*Masculinities* 135).

what are we to make of Waterhouse's paintings where the males do not fit the above genres? The paintings under discussion, *Hylas and the Nymphs*, *The Awakening of*

Adonis, and *Echo and Narcissus*, represent Greek myths about young men who have no function other than as symbols of beauty. These myths, while tragic, share the same theme that the pretty boy does little; he does not need to, he is simply there for visual pleasure. Of course, as in most of Waterhouse's art, the male is doomed. The female remains an object of beauty for Waterhouse's audience, but beauty now includes the male. The male figure commands attention through the gaze of the female protagonist, and is the recipient of lustful and dangerous admiration.

The allurement of the "other" and its dangers is an overarching and oft discussed leitmotif in Waterhouse's art. Writer Nic Peeters explains, "Probably, as was common among the men in this era, a part of Waterhouse deified women while another part of him was terrified of their spiritual and sexual potency" ("Enchanted by Women" 89). For example both Waterhouses's *Lamia* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* depict the tale of a handsome knight beguiled by womanly charms and then defeated. In both paintings the female, placed lower than male, appears submissive and the two figures gaze at each other. The gaze does not objectify; it is a shared moment.

However, in *Hylas and the Nymphs*, seven naiads watch Hylas. Some hope to catch his attention, a few observe quietly, "with faces as still at the sheltered surface of their pool, and cold strange eyes of desire" (Sketchley 23). The naiads' gazes are placid and sinister. In *Echo and Narcissus*, the forlorn Echo (also a naiad) wistfully gazes upon Narcissus: her desire, like her flesh, is exposed. Echo's cheeks flame with romantic ardor. Her right hand grips an upright and erect tree branch, possibly indicative of a penis. The other hand grips the rock ledge. She looks down on Narcissus, whose buttocks are exposed behind him (hinting at Narcissus' male lover). Echo appears to be holding back

from forcing herself onto Narcissus. Of course, he does not see her. He has eyes only for himself, the perfection of male beauty. In these two works, the gaze is not the deep, chivalric love of Tennyson and Keats. It is more of a lustful, scopophilic, animalistic nature.

In *The Awakening of Adonis* Aphrodite hovers almost menacingly over Adonis, staring at his body, waiting for a kiss. Adonis's closed eyes do not meet her gaze. Aphrodite unabashedly enjoys his physicality. Although the title refers to Adonis's awakening, the undercurrent of his eventual death creates tension and ambiguity. Death remains the ultimate end for all of Waterhouse's males, save one, Ulysses. *Ulysses and the Sirens* (1891) (Figure 15) heralded Waterhouse's entry in to the world of the Homer and Ovid. Ulysses alone defeated the power of the other: the perfect foil to Waterhouse's desirable, yet ill-fated youths.

Ulysses, manly, strong and moral fits the accepted Victorian masculine ideal. In the chapter "Artistic Representation" of Kestner's *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, four basic types of manliness are described, "the chivalric, the sentimental-benevolent, the sturdy English [or athletic and vigorous], and the moral" (33). While Ulysses embodies all four types, Hylas, Adonis, and Narcissus lack in all four.

Additionally, Kestner points out the importance of homosocial bonding and the need for male bonding in a group such as school, athletics, and even war (32). In contrast to the steadfast Ulysses depicted with his sailors, the lone youth's vulnerability is heightened. An earlier painting, *A Naiad* (originally titled *Hylas and the Nymph*) (1893) (Figure 16) has disturbing connotations. A very young boy sleeps near a stream watched by an equally young water nymph. Her stance and facial expression seem more

predatory than lustful. The boy, alone and defenseless, is in trouble. This first foray into watery dangers of nymphs and boys is carried through to fruition in *Hylas and The Nymphs*. Granted, Hylas, after being kidnapped by Hercules (who also found him irresistible) became an Argonaut. Yet, he left the group and met his demise. The same can be said for Narcissus. Adonis, raised by two goddesses, had no male bonding and died hunting a boar, alone. These young men may be lovely to gaze upon, but they are not “masculine” in the Victorian sense of the word. Art historian and curator Alison Smith notes, “unlike the heroic male nude, female figures are not required to act or think they just had to give pleasure by virtue of form and color” (*The Victorian Nude* 185). Waterhouse paint male figures as if they were female figures: lovely, pleasurable, and defenseless.

Death and the Pretty Boy

The theme of male objectification in Waterhouse’s seemingly benign scenes of Greek myths set amongst lush, vaguely British woodlands and streams, described by historian Richard Jenkyns as, “the same soft, sedgy, sludgy world” (288) provides a deeper meaning to Waterhouse’s canon. Sexuality and desire for the male are on display. Women are the voyeurs. Men are the sex objects. It is hardly a Victorian mind set but Waterhouse’s ability to paint in such a fluid, familiar, and peaceful manner lulls the viewer into feeling of calmness. Or as biographer Anthony Hobson describes, “It is the moment of stillness-selected, sought, and finally captured on canvas –which is one of chief marks of his genius (*J W Waterhouse* 29) and, “In Waterhouse’s pictures there's always space to breathe and the accompanying air of serenity” (34). Waterhouse’s sense of stillness makes it easy to overlook the more turbulent themes of death, lust, and

suffering also present. Jenkyns writes:

The tension between ebullience and repression, which we often find in Victorian art, manifests itself in varied ways. Sometimes a harmless theme gets a surprisingly erotic treatment. Sometimes the pattern is the reverse: the image seems mild enough but the artist invites the literary imagination to find a more exciting message (287).

Male beauty set against female desire increases the painting's eroticism. The prevailing message is that beautiful boys are a fleeting pleasure. The passive boy, hairless and without bulk, is a weak male, unable to resist the power of the gaze. Older, bearded heroes resist the female gaze to protect and assert their masculinity. Lovatt expands on this idea, explaining:

There is a clear distinction between mature, bearded man (clothed and decorous) and beardless youths (naked and the passive objects of desire), which suggests that ideals of pederastic desire informed the construction of masculinity. This offers another way to protect the masculinity of mature, elite males, but also shows that it was at risk from exposure. Without the hyper-masculine glamour of heroism, men cannot securely allow themselves to become objects of the gaze (271).

With this in mind, it is quite fascinating that Waterhouse depicted Ulysses, the ultimate hero, with a full beard and a marked resemblance to himself. Hylas, Adonis, and Narcissus may be ideal sex objects, with their curly locks, smooth bodies, and passive natures, but they are no match for true heroes like Hercules or Ulysses. And more importantly, these boys are never rescued from their tragic endings, despite the artist's ability to do so. As feminist critic Germaine Greer writes:

Western painters and poets, themselves no longer boys, vie with each other in depicting the untimely deaths of boys. Their public, male and female, apparently takes great delight in beholding such images and hearing such tales (195).

Flower Kings

These paintings set in the forest, deep with foliage, flowers, and lush vegetation portray a dream-like world that encourages fantasy and reflection. Waterhouse's artwork contains a reverence for things unseen. The seasons, with their cycles of death and renewal weave a thread throughout his canon. Rose Sketchley quite eloquently called this, "the embroidery of Persephone" (1). And though they seem to reflect late nineteenth-century gynophobic fears and themes of death, they can also be viewed as images of nature and rejuvenation. Peter Trippi observes that the:

Adonis and Echo narratives celebrate the passionate awakenings, deaths and metamorphoses that elevated their tales into myths. These transfigurations all convey a hopeful message of natural regeneration, the survival of the immortal soul after the death of the body, and the potential for resurrection" (160).

Of the three, the best known ancient ritual is The Adonia Festival, a springtime festival for women to lament and mourn over the loss of Adonis. For this festival, rooftop gardens of quick-growing shoots are planted and then neglected. The young plants wither away as Adonis did. An effigy of Adonis, strewn with flowers, would be cried over and then released to the sea. The Adonis festival mourns Adonis' death while celebrating his eventual return in spring. Adonis, associated with spring because of the anemone, which, as the myth relates, bears the color of his blood. The anemone, an early springtime bloom, announces the end of winter, but like Adonis it dies much too soon. The narcissus, another announcer of spring, takes its name from the myth. Though Narcissus himself does not return, the flower brings beauty to the landscape, and so he is remembered. Hylas, though not a flower, also has ties to the earth.

In *Echoing Hylas*, which discusses Hylas' importance to poetry, Classics professor Mark Heerink notes that, "the figure of Hylas has also been seen as a local vegetation God, whose 'death' coincides with the seasonal decline in the natural world" (4) and "is the focus of an annual religious ceremony characterized by the lament of the participants" (4). Sketchley also noticed Hylas' ties with nature, remarking, "With faces still as the sheltered surface of their pool, and cold, strange eyes of desire, these nymphs seem really 'native and enuded' to the waters, as Hylas, ardent in his youth, is to the earth" (23).

So while we can, and should view, these mythological "Waterhouse Boys" as sex objects, lustfully watched in various ways by women, the notion that these boys also represent the natural world and symbolize flowers and spring, offers an alternate interpretation to Waterhouse's later works such as *Windflowers*, *The Flower Picker*, and *Narcissus*, where young women innocently pick flowers.

Trippi, when writing about a series of these flower paintings notes, "There is no evidence that Waterhouse exhibited this beautiful series, which unites his interest in flower picking, arching bodies, and open meadows. Inexplicably unique in this period is *Echo and Narcissus*" (187). However, looking back to Adonis, Narcissus, and Hylas, and their functions as springtime deities and/or flowers, the inclusion of *Echo and Narcissus* makes sense.

These innocent paintings tell the same story of young women enjoying the short-lived pleasure of these Flower-Kings; picking them at the height of their beauty. It is the same idea, but the boys are no longer present. They have become the flowers. The term Flower-King is directly related to Germaine Greer's work where she calls Narcissus a

“spring-flower hero” (197) and Adonis “the ultimate flower-hero” (198).

Her argument, at least for deaths of springtime flower-boys, is that:

The association of untimely death with maleness rather than femaleness, the election of a spring-flower king rather than a queen can be explained socio-biologically by reference to the obvious fact that, because a single man can pass on his genes to hundreds of women, most of the male population is redundant” (197).

It is an interesting supposition that certainly brings to mind the myths of Hylas, Narcissus and Adonis, who Waterhouse painted surrounded by nymphs and goddesses, and flowers, enhancing their relationship to flowers and nature.

In *Adonis*, cupids carry roses (symbol of love) and the ground is strewn with anemones (death and renewal). The flowers closest to Adonis take on red hues, symbolizing blood. In *Hylas*, water lilies envelop the scene, while the nymphs use lilies and poppies as fascinators. It should be noted, in defense of the nymphs, that water lilies symbolize innocence and purity. Pearls, which one nymph offers to Hylas, are another symbol of purity. These nymphs, as young as they are, may be viewed as virginal, offering themselves to Hylas. But does that make them any less deadly? Poppies, long associated with sleep, dreams and death, indicate a less than happy ending for Hylas. Jonquils, emblems of desire, and other yellow flowers complete the natural flora and enrich the color scheme. Jonquils and narcissi (floral cousins), also feature prominently in *Echo and Narcissus*.

The yellow jonquils, placed next to Echo represent desire. The white narcissi, hovering at the edge of the canvas near Narcissus symbolize the traits of self-love and egotism. These flowers are obvious choices, as they speak to the audience (who understood the language flowers) to tell the story. More subtle floral messages are found

in Echo's hair, and in the mushroom near her feet. The red poppy, specifically the corn poppy, tells of consolation found only in dreams. This means that Echo will not find physical satisfaction on this plane. The dark mushroom, almost unseen, is a symbol of male virility and suspicion. It is an odd choice, and the mushroom does not appear in other works. Placed near Echo it may indicate that she is untrustworthy. Or, like the branch she holds, it may indicate male arousal. Echo is so desirable that nature takes notice, but Narcissus does not. Crowned in laurel, he is the artist, the poet, and a symbol of glory. He is also a symbol of innocence and beauty. Echo, through her gaze, symbolizes lust and desire.

Waterhouse's mythic paintings remain true to their literary source, whether it be Pausanias, Ovid or Theocritus. A true representation of the myth is the core. But modern elements, such as the masculine figure contrasted with a passive female figure, could position his art within the sculptural concerns of New Sculpture. While the open gaze of the females correlates with the nineteenth-century's new fascination of the male form as spectacle found in Physical Culture and at the matinées of London where men performed and women watched.

Chapter IV

New Sculpture, Physical Culture and Male Nudity Displayed

Waterhouse's post-1890 mythological paintings are accepted as forays into the misogynistic views of the era. The *fin-de-siècle* art of the nineteenth-century is inundated with images of female beings whose sexual, mystical powers dominate and destroy the male. Joseph Kestner posits:

Mythological allusion was used further to reinforce or to condemn a certain normal behavior. Negatively, the language of nineteenth-century social discourse invoked classical precedents like the Siren or Aphrodite or Circe to indicate that women's nature has been eternally prone to deviant behavior (*Mythology* 5).

In Waterhouse's canon as well, biographers and historians have marked on the misogynistic elements of his work, while others have applauded Waterhouse for his portrayals of powerful women. Throughout the scholarship the importance of Symbolism, occultism, and fears, created by the emerging New Woman demonstrate Waterhouse's awareness of contemporary society and art developments. Kestner remarks, "Waterhouse during the 1890s explored a variety of classical subjects to define contemporary conditions" (*Mythology* 296). Yet, Kestner does not delve much beyond a discussion of Waterhouse's fear and fascination with women and an obsession with the birth-cycle trauma (296-299). And this thesis in no way devalues Kestner's work, but hopes to expand upon his argument that "in the 1890s, Waterhouse turned to classical-subject painting to express a kind of public attitudes" (297).

This chapter positions Waterhouse's works, *Hylas and the Nymphs*, *Adonis*, and *Echo as Narcissus* as possible commentaries on the increasing role of women as spectators and their correlation to New Sculpture, to explain the change in Waterhouse's art. Scholars agree that *something* changed in Waterhouse around 1890, the year his father died. Hobson remarks, "The year 1890, was marked by the death of Nino's father . . . Perhaps understandably Waterhouse did not send a picture to the Royal Academy of 1890, but 1891 saw his positive reversion to the Greek legends" (*J W Waterhouse* 45). Peter Trippi, discussing Waterhouse's short break from the Academy, notes, "like so much of this artist's life, this hiatus is undocumented, but it seems to have encompassed a self-reinvention" (*Waterhouse* 17) and "Mysteriously, in 1891, almost twenty years after he left the Schools, he describes himself as both a painter and sculptist [sic]" (18). I propose part of Waterhouse's "self-reinvention" is the influence of New Sculpture, and may be a continuation of the sculptural studies he began in 1871.

New Sculpture

New Sculpture, a term coined in 1894 by art critic Edmund Gosse, reflects a transformation in the somewhat stagnant state of British sculpture by the mid nineteenth-century. Feeling somewhat confined by the strictness and repetitious themes of the neoclassical art so favored by the British academies and art world, some British artists and sculptors such as Alfred Gilbert, Frederic Leighton and Hamo Thornycroft explored Italian Renaissance sculpture, specifically the works of Donatello and Michelangelo, and nineteenth-century French sculptors. Early works of the style contain dynamic movement, muscular realism, and contrasts of materials. Later, in the 1880s and 1890s,

sculptors associated with this movement, like Frederick William Pomeroy, Edward Onslow Ford, Albert Toft and Harry Bates, influenced by their French training, under the tutelage of James Dalou and Edouard Lantieri brought elements of Symbolism and French Realism to the style. New Sculpture was not in any way an organized group with a unified vision, like the Pre-Raphaelites, but they did share a desire to breathe new life into British sculpture and make it a viable and important form of art.

New Sculpture, despite the enthusiasm of critics and artists was not readily received at the Royal Academy. It was at the smaller, more progressive schools, such as the Slade or South Kensington, which did not resist the influence of French art, that New Sculpture established itself. A review about sculpture at the annual Royal Academy exhibit in *The Saturday Review* of May 24, 1884, mentions the outsider status of these sculptors, “The exhibition at the Royal Academy is especially rich this year in imaginative groups and figures, mainly by outsiders” (677). However, by 1888, the acceptance of sculptors Hamo Thornycroft and Edward Onslow Ford into the Academy illustrates the movement’s acceptance at the Academy.

It is not a far stretch to accept that Waterhouse knew of and was influenced by the New Sculpture, which flourished under Lord Frederic Leighton’s reign as President of the Royal Academy from 1878 to 1896. Leighton’s presidency, as scholar Susan Beattie in *New Sculpture* asserts, “heralded a dramatic advancement in the Academy’s relationship with sculpture” (34) and life drawing and modeling classes improved. Waterhouse, elected as an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1885 and a full Academician in 1895, would have been aware of these improvements, and may have even engaged in some classes.

Waterhouse's semi-draped nudes appear after 1891 when the Academy expanded their life drawing classes, though the models still wore draped fabrics. These changes indicate the rising popularity of the New Sculpture movement and the Academy's acknowledgment of sculpture as an important art form. Waterhouse may have adopted some of their techniques. The impact that painting and sculpture were having on another is explained by Robert Upstone who notes in *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts: Symbolist Art in Britain 1860-1910* that, "By the beginning of the decade the New Sculpture had established itself as a significant and innovatory school. There is throughout the movement a sense of the interpenetration of the two arts" (247).

Waterhouse may have had an affinity for New Sculpture and its influence on Waterhouse may explain why Waterhouse's figures changed in the 1890s. Peter Trippi observes:

Although he continued to paint powerful women, Waterhouse began to rely more heavily upon younger, physically immature, flatter chest girls. From picture to picture, their flesh was exposed or draped to varying degrees, yet it was always painted to appear smooth and chaste, uncomplicated by musculature or distinctive markings (*Waterhouse* 125).

I contribute this change to the influence of New Sculpture, which favored females with younger, slim bodies, small breasts and boyish figures, and flawless skin. The passive, smooth, and muscle-free female figures found in Edward Onslow Ford's *Echo* (1895) (Figure 17), Frederick Pomeroy's *Nymph of Loch Awe* (1897) (Figure 18) and Harry Bates' *Pandora* (1891) are a few examples of idealized femininity of New Sculpture. In terms of lack of musculature, porcelain skin and placid manner, their overall look recalls Waterhouse's nymphs.

Another confluence of ideas occurs between Waterhouse's *The Mermaid* (1892-1900) (Figure 19) and Harry Bates's *Psyche* panel (1887) (Figure 20). Though the two

storylines are quite different, Bates refers to the Greek myth *Cupid and Psyche* while Waterhouse paints a fantastical aquatic female possibly based on a Tennyson poem, the body type and profile mimic one another, except where Psyche's feet entwine, the mermaid's tail curls. In both, a lone, wistful female waits against the backdrop of nature. Psyche perches on a rock as gales blow making her hair stream out in the wind. The mermaid, posed on the rocky shore of a craggy beach, combs her flowing hair, mimicking Psyche's blowy tresses. They have the same figure with sloped shoulders, bent arms, and curved belly. The two carry a message of elusive beauty and feminine connections to wind and water. Waterhouse began *The Mermaid* in 1892 after he had claimed himself a "sculptist" when he may have been looking to the New Sculptors, who had gained much academic, critical, and financial support by the 1890s, as a new well for inspiration.

While visual similarities suggest that Waterhouse and Bates knew each other, so does the fact that Waterhouse purchased Bates's studio at 10 Hall Road, St John's Wood, London. Waterhouse moved here from his Primrose Hill studios in 1900, taking over the space after Bates's death in 1899. Waterhouse remained there until his death in 1917. Through his involvement in such groups as the Art-Workers Guild and the St. John's Wood Art Club, which enrolled several sculptors as members, Waterhouse appears to be part of a social and/or artistic circle that included the New Sculptors¹.

The first generally recognized New Sculpture work is Frederic Leighton's *An*

1. A number of New Sculptors attended Waterhouse's funeral. Among those present were Albert Tofts, Frederick W. Pomeroy, and George Frampton (represented by his wife).

Athlete Wrestling with A Python (1877) (Figure 21). Its powerful presentation of spiral movement, multi-angled perspective, as well as male strength and dominance galvanized the London art scene. Edmund Gosse describes Leighton's sculpture, "Here was something far more vital and nervous than the soft following of Flaxman dreamed of . . . This in short was something wholly new" (14 -15). New Sculpture celebrated the male body and its potential.

The potential of a boy's strength and purpose was captured in Hamo Thornycroft's popular and influential sculpture, *The Mower* (1882) (Figure 22). A young farm hand, stripped to the waist, rests for a moment his scythe held in his hand, the other hand rests on his hip as he looks out the viewer. Cast in bronze the young man appears as heroic as Donatello's *David*, but far more masculine. He is British strength and labor immortalized. The sculpture speaks of potential energy and power, and male beauty. Another popular artwork, evoking the themes of male beauty and potential power is Leighton's *The Sluggard* (1886) (Figure 23). As in his earlier *Athlete Wrestling a Python* the dynamism of the male figure engages the viewer.

Arguably, Waterhouse's predilection for males in distress goes against the New Sculpture ethos that the nude male implies strength. Anthony Hobson compares Waterhouse's heroes to Leighton's, and finds them lacking:

Hercules Wrestling with Death for the Body of Alcestis and in the sculptured *Athlete Struggling with a Python* are extraordinarily powerful in their action. Waterhouse's heroes are less active and, it may be said, less formidable. They often fall into watery graves: Hylas, Orpheus, the drowning sailor with the Siren (*Art and Life* 157).

While Waterhouse may not have latched to on to the symbols of strength and morality associated with New Sculpture there are stylistic changes and visual similarities in

Waterhouse's art that coincide with the movement.

Like Waterhouse, New Sculpture artists sought out poetry and myths for their compositions. Often the images were allegorical or focused on formalist concerns, grounded in the celebration of the human form. These sorts of artworks were called "imaginative" and came from the artist's vision. It may seem a contradiction to call these sculptures "imaginative" as they do showcase the physical form. Later New Sculptors, such as Albert Toft, utilized sculptural forms to invoke emotions or imagination. Beattie, explains, "Above all, their motive is the expression in sculptural terms of a state of mind. Their true subject matter is neither classical myth nor the visible world, but yearning grief, and dream" (52).

This interest in the imagination and dream-like images pervades Waterhouse's works as well. Rose Sketchley, described Waterhouse's later mythic works as "imageries" and viewed them as "nature-poetry." Her influential 1909 article "The Art of J.W. Waterhouse" consistently remarks on the introspective and imaginative qualities of Waterhouse's paintings, especially in later works. For Sketchley (one of the few writers who had Waterhouse's assistance), his art "has a ministry that reaches beyond sense, endows sensation itself with a more assured capacity of final fulfillment beyond- say rather through the visible ends of the world" (25). Or as British art scholar Elizabeth Prettejohn comments, "Waterhouse's imagination seemed not merely to produce new readings of old stories . . . Waterhouse was able to create a world of his own, a world in which nothing was commonplace and yet everything made sense" (23).

A comparison of John William Waterhouse's *Cleopatra* (1877) (Figure 24) and Albert Toft's *Spirit of Contemplation* (1888) (Figure 25) suggests a crossing of the ideas

concerning imagination and realms beyond the five senses with a complementary visual vocabulary that evokes Symbolist themes. Waterhouse's Symbolist tendencies may also reflect his interest in New Sculpture, which relied heavily on Symbolist art. Trippi's comment, "A sculptor himself, Waterhouse knew many New Sculptors, whose idealized images of women in contemplation often bore Symbolist undercurrents" (*Waterhouse* 151) affirms Waterhouse's relationship to New Sculpture which is further enhanced by the discussion of Albert Toft's *Spirit of Contemplation* and Waterhouse's *Cleopatra*.

Albert Toft and Symbolist Art

John Hamer of the *Magazine of Art* introduced Albert Toft as an "imaginative realist" proclaiming:

But a realist in the French sense he certainly is not. . . Realism is a tendency for certain artists to represent nature under its real and purely material aspect. This is Zola-ism at its worst for, which is much opposed as anything well could be to Mr. Toft's methods. Rather let us describe him as an imaginative realist for he imparts to his work a quality of soul and charm of which the French realist has not the secret ("Our Rising Artists" 394).

It is interesting that Hamer considered Toft's work the opposite of Emile Zola, since the Symbolist writers rejected Emile Zola's poetry due to its basis in naturalism. Symbolist art, of course, has its roots in France. In 1886 Jean Moreas published his "Symbolist Manifesto" in France's *Figaro* newspaper, and relates more to poetry and literature than visual art, but it planted the thought that art needed to explore and represent Ideas, things that go beyond the five senses and delve into the realms of dreams and the subconscious. By criticizing Zola's work and embracing Toft's "imaginative realism" the article equates Toft with Symbolism. Of course, the more traditional nineteenth-century mind-set, especially at the Royal Academy of Art, negated French art in favor of British art.

Waterhouse, although considered a true Academy painter, admired French artists and explored their styles. His *Lady of Shalott* (1888) (Figure 26), while extremely British in subject matter, is painted with French plein-air techniques and naturalism in the style of Julien Bastien-LePage (Upstone, “Between Innovation and Tradition” 38-40). While many contemporary critics appreciated Waterhouse’s turn towards Pre-Raphaelite subject matter, his thick painterly technique, with its square brush pattern, and the naturalism of the landscape was criticized for being “too French.” Upstone connects Waterhouse to Symbolism, stating “the dark undercurrents that underpin Waterhouse’s work can be investigated rewardingly by reviewing him in context with the pan-European phenomenon, symbolist painting” (37). Perhaps Albert Toft, admiring this trend in Waterhouse, utilized Waterhouse’s *Cleopatra* for his *Spirit of Contemplation*.

Waterhouse’s *Cleopatra*, commissioned in 1887, was part of a special edition of *The Graphic* which featured twenty-one of Shakespeare’s heroines painted by successful artists such as Alma-Tadema, Watts, and Blair Leighton. Sylvia Morris, former head of the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archives, explained that these illustrations are “character studies not portraits of actresses” (“Images of Shakespeare’s Heroines” np). There is something very demure and very British about these heroines. Overall, the heroines share a certain femininity combined with a dose of sentimentality that pleased Victorian audiences. The paintings reflect a sort of national pride exemplified by the British Rose. Except for Waterhouse’s *Cleopatra* who broods inwardly, her sensuality heightened by her gauzy clothing and smoldering gaze. She is not a demure heroine but a dark *femme fatale*.

The wall behind her is decorated with the Egyptian winged solar disk, a symbol of

divinity and royalty, while her arm rests on a feline-like animal, which acts as a protective totem, invoking themes of magic. Cleopatra's white robes, seated manner, and slightly open lips, indicate speech and imply prophecy. Her asp-adorned crown alludes to her power and her death. Cleopatra entices the viewer with thoughts of inner reflection, the power of prophecy, and the mysticism of ancient ceremony. A reviewer in *The Theatre* journal, Almyer Gowing, characterizes Waterhouse's *Cleopatra* as:

the spider centred in her meshes weaving new wiles to ensnare to death the bodies and souls of men . . . she beckons with her eyes from beneath her bold black brow; the dark brown on her red lips seems to quiver with whispered love spells (82).

However, *Cleopatra's* powerful gaze, introspective nature, and Egyptian symbols create a character, not an idea or anything of the subconscious. Waterhouse portrays a literary character, as indicated by the Shakespearian verse printed with the image, "Where's my serpent of old Nile? For so he calls me." (*Cleopatra* 2640). We know her thoughts and we know her fate. *Cleopatra* is far too concrete to be considered a Symbolist artwork. Though it utilizes the *femme fatale* and inward gaze associated with Symbolist art, it does not address the Symbolist concepts that art needs to release itself from literary representation and focus on intangibles, like emotions, thoughts, and the human psyche. American art historian Michelle Faocos outlines the credentials for a Symbolist work as, "A Symbolist work of art may not include conventional illustration or allegory. The work must also have unambiguously signaled (to contemporary audiences) that it refers primarily to ideas" (2). But the elements are there and it can be argued that Toft used *Cleopatra* as source material.

Spirit of Contemplation is considered one of Toft's most important works. Nineteenth-century art critic Marion H. Spielmann wrote this, "is the most complete of

all Mr. Toft's works. Life-size, it is a beautiful representation of the female form, original, almost daring, in its simple arrangement, decorative with praiseworthy self-restraint, dignified and refined" (*British Sculpture and Sculptors of Today* 122). Unlike the *Cleopatra*, *Contemplation* has no literal or allegorical meaning. She is Toft's representation of the inner psyche and reflection. The decorative figures represent Courage, Philosophy, Life, and Love. Like Waterhouse's *Cleopatra*, the figure reclines on a throne. Her expression gives little away, but emotes deep thought. Her headdress similar to *Cleopatra's* with a vague Egyptian motif, lends a sense of nineteenth-century Orientalism and mysticism. But unlike Waterhouse, who surrounds his heroine in golden hues and ornamentation, Toft, in Symbolist fashion, strips away the decadence to provide an austere symbol of emotions and humanity. It is uncertain whether she is a priestess, goddess, or a femme fatale. She is a product of Toft's imagination and Symbolist art ideas. It deals in the intangible, using the female figure to invoke and symbolize realms beyond what we see, although it is a continuation of a theme started by Waterhouse. My comparison of Albert Toft to Waterhouse helps establish formal connections between Waterhouse and Symbolist art to demonstrate their shared visual language and to enhance the scholarship on Waterhouse's alignment to the New Sculpture. Another comparison, that of Waterhouse's *The Awakening of Adonis* and Leighton's *The Sluggard*, while not about Symbolism, strengthens the case for New Sculpture's influence.

Owning the Boy: *Adonis* and The Cult of the Statuette

Peter Trippi and Anthony Hobson propose that Waterhouse looked to the *Etruscan Endymion* as a visual source for his *Adonis*, I propose Waterhouse looked to Leighton's *The Sluggard*. Originally exhibited as *An Athlete Awakening From Sleep*, it

represents, with masculine perfection, the moment when Leighton's model, Giuseppe Valona, wearily yawned and stretched. In a transitory moment between asleep and awake, Waterhouse's *The Awakening of Adonis* represents Adonis emerging from his seasonal sleep. Similar points of time they capture the subject's transition between rest and activity. *The Sluggard*, a lay-about, does little except sleep. Adonis also lacks vitality. According to Greek rhetorician Athenaeus, Adonis was impotent because Aphrodite hid Adonis in a lettuce-bed, referring to the poetical allegory that constant eating of lettuce produces sterility (*Deipnosophistae* 2. 69b-d). In Shakespeare's version of *Venus and Adonis* (1593), a hot-blooded Venus pursues a frosty and pouty Adonis, who has absolutely no desire.

Leighton's *The Sluggard* seems to be a companion character. The model's impressive figure certainly implies strength, but the title refers to the Biblical Proverb 6:9 "How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?" *The Sluggard*, or *An Athlete Awakening From Sleep*, can also be read as an Aesthetic artwork, to be appreciated for its beauty alone, a work without moral meaning. While Leighton's *Athlete Wrestling a Python* evokes man's excellence, prompting Kestner to exclaim, "there was little question the statue represented masculine heroism," (*Mythology* 155) *The Sluggard* is the exact opposite, representing male beauty in an aesthetic way. Art historians and Leighton biographers Leonée and Richard Ormond view *The Sluggard* as "more subtle in modeling than the earlier *Athlete*, in a more sensual way, the subject is disturbingly self-conscious" (*Leighton* 94). Understood in this way, as another beautiful but "useless" male, *The Sluggard* fits quite well with Waterhouse's canon of pretty boys.

The visual similarities evident in Adonis's stretched torso, arched back, turned

head, upright arms, clenched fists, and pointed knee, echo Leighton's sculpture.

Waterhouse's sketchbook contains several sketches of *The Awakening of Adonis*.

Waterhouse struggled with the position of Adonis. Originally, Adonis sits partially upright, as Aphrodite leans forward into a kiss, creating an awkward pose that diminishes Adonis' appeal (c. 1900) (Figure 26) Adonis appears weak and unable to support himself. It is interesting that at the end of this series of sketches, a drawing of a well-defined torso (c. 1900) (Figure 27), resembling *The Sluggard* appears. Perhaps, Waterhouse, unable to resolve the difficult composition of a person leaning upwards, decided a prone position accentuating the upper anatomy was a better choice.

Waterhouse would have been familiar with *The Sluggard*, it being a celebrated artwork by the President of the Academy, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1885, the same year Waterhouse exhibited his very successful *St Eulalia*. *The Sluggard*, although it did not have the same critical impact of Leighton's *Wrestling with a Python*, remains one of Leighton's most recognizable artworks. An emerging statuette market, another hallmark of New Sculpture, cast *The Sluggard* into smaller, more affordable bronzes that could easily adorn a library or hallway. It sold extremely well, as did Thornycroft's *The Mower*. Edmund Gosse, that great champion of New Sculpture, professed, in the article, "The Place Of Sculpture In Daily Life," that this new trend could edify the home, claiming "By far, the most adequate way, however, in which sculpture can be used in the house, is the by the introduction of statuettes. A great air of distinction and refinement is given to a room by the presence of such figures" (371) and "Mr. Collie, of 39a, Old Bond Street who publishes charming specimens by such eminent sculptors as Leighton, Thornycroft, Onslow Ford, and Frampton, deserves high commendation for the zeal with

which he has sought to encourage his department of the art” (372). New Sculpture sought to find a common ground between the ideas of high art, decorative art and a way to make sculpture as profitable and accessible as painting.

The desire for smaller scale sculpture and decorative bas-reliefs championed by New Sculpture and its support of the decorative arts provided women with more opportunities to establish careers. Women artists were gaining (very slowly) some ground in arenas such as the Art Union, The National Training School, and The Slade School. At the South Kensington School, Edouard Lanteri, a great teacher and influence on New Sculpture, allowed females into his modeling classes (Beattie 195). In the field of decorative sculpture, such as bas-reliefs and statuettes, women found a new outlet.

Beattie writes:

It may be argued that the dramatic rise in women sculptors to prominence in the 1890s was directly related to the changing image of the art. The cult, not only of the statuettes, but of modeling, as the sculptors most direct means of self-expression, and the consequent revolution in the commercial bronze founding industry, had deeply undermined the principal argument against women’s involvement and sculpture, their inability to cope with the sheer physical effort required. (194).

Among the most popular statuettes cast was Leighton’s *Sluggard*. New Sculpture scholar David J. Getsy describes the unique, personal experience of *The Sluggard*

statuette:

The 52.8 cm statuette contrasted greatly with the finely articulated surface of the life-size statue. On the smaller, domestic scale, the statuette bore the indexical traces of Leighton’s handling of the modello and invited the viewer to take up the statuette her or himself. In fact, the spiral composition of *The Sluggard* resulted in a figure that fits perfectly into one’s right hand... At this size, it offered a satisfyingly manual experience that implied the ability to handle and rotate the figure (40).

Beattie asserts the statuette market was “commonly acknowledged to have reached the proportion of a cult by the turn of the century” (181). Historian Jason Edwards explains

that the statuette sparked controversy because “of the way in which its small scale, tactile appeal, and affordable price, enabled viewers to take naked figures into their hands and into their bedrooms” (np). This idea of personal ownership and objectification of a sculpture to provide both a pleasurable and visual experience may be a possible underlying theme of *The Awakening of Adonis*.

Aphrodite’s love for Adonis has always been extremely possessive. After all, she does hide him away in a chest (Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.183) like a secret treasure. Waterhouse’s Aphrodite dominates Adonis. Aphrodite closely inspects Adonis with hands clasped in delight. This could be read as a representation of ownership. Aphrodite owns Adonis like a statuette of *The Sluggard*. The closeness of Aphrodite to Adonis creates a tension of touch. The tactility of the statuette is recreated through Aphrodite’s tenseness, as she seems to be on the verge of touching him. But for the moment she owns him in her gaze.

And although art historian Tamar Gabar discusses the social and moral issues surrounding the female art student in nineteenth-century France, and not Waterhouse, the following quote applies quite well, “Momentarily we are offered a complete inversion of traditional power relations in a visual field: a woman in possession of the gaze, a beautiful male body provides the unthreatening spectacle” (“The Forbidden Gaze” 37).

Waterhouse seems to be skewing the usual power dynamic of who holds the gaze, but to what purpose? Whether it is Hylas, Adonis, or Narcissus these males are presented to the viewer as something to enjoy and admire. We (the audience) are presented a tableau where all eyes are on the male figure. Of course, the storylines end in tragedy and the viewer’s reception to the painting results in a mixed message of the superiority of

the male figure and the sexualizing of it.

The Greek Ideal and Physical Culture

In the late nineteenth-century the British became fascinated with Greek culture. Richard Jenkyns writes, “We have heard Kingsley [A British educator] telling the children that the visible influence of ancient Greece is all around them in the fabric of their everyday lives: Greek buildings, Greek furniture, Greek patterns from the wallpaper” (*Dignity and Decadence* 2). The desire for all things Greek even set the standard for male beauty. Alison Smith conveys, “men were similarly assessed according to the classical canon of beauty” (*Exposed* 18). Hylas, Adonis, and Narcissus, unlike the gaunt priest of Asclepius or the haggard Nero, appear fresh with palpable, marble flesh that hints at sculptural perfection. Artfully draped, their togas are less about clothing and more about strategic placement of color, highlighting and hiding the male anatomy. Their cropped curly hair and pale skin appear more British than Greek. This makes one ponder, as Jenkyns does in *Dignity and Decadence* that, “this picture [*Hylas and the Nymphs*] suggests a further question: how Greek is the scene? How so English those water nymphs seem, how English Hylas: he has the face and haircut of an Edwardian undergraduate” (288).

Waterhouse’s storyline may have Ovid and the Classics as their framework but the models are Anglo-Saxon in appearance and give a sense of modernity to the artworks. This enhances their possibility as commentary on common themes important to the audience. And one theme that would make one pause is the victimization of the male which Kestner’s notes, “Waterhouse has presented the image of a seduced male, after

years of seduction scenes with the woman was the victim” (299). Another is that Waterhouse’s inclusion of British boys with Classical bodies could mirror the impact of Physical Culture, both an athletic trend and a popular theatrical entertainment, it urged men to work their bodies and emulate Greek statues. It posed that a perfect physique represented a cultivated mind and that the male body was Britain’s symbol of excellence. Not surprisingly New Sculpture and Physical Culture are closely linked.

The most well known proponent of Physical Culture, German born Eugen Sandow, owes a great deal to New Sculpture and art in general. Sandow, a body builder, spearheaded Physical Culture, promoting that the male body was a work of art, like a Classical Greek sculpture. His stunning physique impressed many artists, and Sandow, very early in his career modeled for several sculptors in Belgium. Later, while living in Italy, the painter Aubrey Hunt so taken with Sandow, had to paint him. Legend dictates Hunt recommended Sandow go to London in 1890 to challenge the great Samson, a rival bodybuilder. Sandow won. His muscular and graceful physique, very different from the bulky bodybuilders of the burlesque stage, spurred a whole generation of males to change their bodies and embrace the Physical Cultural movement, which like New Sculpture promoted British superiority in the perfection of the male figure.

Sandow, although he had great disdain for artist’s models (overlooking his own beginnings) admired fine art and heavily promoted sculpture. Leighton’s *Athlete* and Thornycroft’s *Teucer* appeared in *Sandow’s Magazine*. An article titled “Athletics in Relation to Life and The Fine Arts” espoused gymnasiums and clubhouses to “place photograph of the finest statues, antique and modern” throughout the gym (Hutchinson 415). The article included a large photograph of *The Sluggard*. In 1901, Sandow

collaborated with Frederick W. Pomeroy on a statuette of himself to give away as a trophy at bodybuilding competitions (it is still used today at the Mr. Olympia competition). According to Michael Hatt, Sandow, “produced statuettes of himself for the home, perhaps imitating developments in art sculpture” (“Physical Culture” 245). Sandow also relied on photography to promote his physique, posing frequently in very little clothing, imitating sculptures, such as the *Dying Gaul*. These depictions inspired men to achieve health and robust physicality.

The earliest known photograph of Sandow (Figure 28) is by photographer Henry Van der Weyde. Photographed in 1889, a fig leaf coyly placed to conceal, the image of Sandow’s body gained the attention of both Edmund Gosse and the esteemed cultural historian and literary critic John Addington Symonds. In a series of letters, discovered in 1999 by John G. Younger, written by Symonds to Gosse, Younger observes, “One of the remarkable aspects of this series of letters is the homoerotic language Gosse and Symonds use” (“10 Unpublished Letters” 2). Symonds upon viewing a photograph of Sandow sent to him by Gosse, proclaimed Sandow a, “superb piece of breathing manhood” (2). Michael Hatt, David J. Gesty, and other nineteenth-century scholars have written extensively on homoeroticism in New Sculpture and Physical Culture and include these letters. This thesis explores another aspect of these letters and that is the threat that Symonds thought these images posed to the male viewer. In the letter, Symonds argues:

It is really illogical of the authorities, knowing what morals are & what the law is, to permit the open sale of such photographs. . . authorizing the sale of pictures which cannot fail to be *verführerisch* [or *verführerisch*, German for seductive] in many instances. They would not allow a fancy female dancer to be sold in effigy like this; there are no laws about women (2).

Symonds appears to be complaining about the hypocrisy of a society that makes homosexuality illegal but allows the publication of photographs of young men while not allowing the public dissemination of similar images of females. Sandow's biographer David L. Chapman detects a bit of a "double standard" in these photographs noting, "pictures of men in skimpy attire might have gotten past the censors, the corresponding pictures of half clad females would have been unthinkable (*Sandow the Magnificent* 65), at least in England. The reason that male nudity, in Victorian times, known for its prudery, did not meet the same scrutiny as female nudity is that higher institutions such as the Royal Academy and New Sculpture artists professed that the male nude epitomized decency and excellence. Because of its long-established tradition as the icon of truth and beauty, Victorians accepted this male nudity. Hatt professes:

What made all this male flesh acceptable, of course, was its idealization and its normative masculinity. While the moral significance of the form was occasionally made explicit . . . viewers would have been only aware of the male nude as embodiment of the classical ethos that is an essential ingredient in Victorian masculinity ("Physical Culture" 243).

Sandow's performances of statuesque poses and physical feats filled the music hall seats. His act, like his photographs relied on the philosophy that if the act somehow recreated Greece, morality would be assuaged. Professor Maria Wyke's, article "Herculean Muscle!: The Classicizing Rhetoric of Bodybuilding," which traces the influence of Classical art on bodybuilding throughout its history, agrees that Sandow's audiences, "could acknowledge their own sophistication in the act of recognition and admiration of high art. The appeal to 'self-improvement' then gave an additional, moral legitimacy to the practice of building and displaying highly defined musculature" (55). But Sandow, recounted by Chapman, "encouraged audience members (male and female)

to stroke his biceps” and when “his admirers were fondling Sandow they were satisfying feelings other than mere curiosity” (*Sandow* 75). This challenged the masculine morality espoused by the art elite.

The desire to own Sandow’s body, in the form of collecting of nude photographs, whether by young girls or educated art connoisseurs for pleasure represents the flipside to New Sculpture and Physical Culture which is the display of the male body for consumerism and gratification. Theater historian, Michael Deslandes comments that, “The proliferation of images of muscular bodies provided aspiring physical culturists with points of comparison as well as a broad range of erotic (even pornographic) opportunities for women and same-sex desiring men” (1196). Chapman emphasizes, “Young ladies could therefore admire his countenance in privacy” (*Sandow* 34). A large portion of Sandow’s audiences was female. Photos of bodybuilders portrayed as Greek sculpture may have created the illusion of high art, but young girls avidly collecting these photos and secreting them away from prying eyes tells a different story.

This social trend of ownership of the male form under the female gaze offers a new reading of *The Awakening of Adonis*. Is Aphrodite an Aesthete appreciating Adonis’s beauty as a sensual and ideal work of art? Perhaps she is a bourgeoise housewife admiring a new statuette? Or is she merely a middle-class girl ogling a man’s body reducing him to nothing more than a sex object? These are an unanswerable as there is no documentation. But if, as Kestner theorizes, Waterhouse’s post-1890s works reflect an anxiety over the New Woman and the changing status of the male, viewing *The Awakening of Adonis* as a commentary on the exploitation of the male is applicable.

Chapter V

Hylas and the Matinee Girl

Building on last chapter's discussion of the rise of the female spectator, this chapter looks at Waterhouse's *Hylas and the Nymphs* as commentary on the social impact of the matinée girl at the theaters, an area where women sought personal freedom and expression, seeking access in a male-dominated realm, which coincided with more visual access to the male. Waterhouse's paintings of physically submissive women peering at desirable males fit well with Michael Deslandes' construct that:

Contrasts between active male bodies and stereotyped images of passive female spectators at college boat races at Oxford and Cambridge, as I have noted elsewhere serve to reinforce late nineteenth and earlier twentieth-century gender hierarchies and the distinction between masculine insiders and feminine outsiders (1194).

To clarify, what Deslandes means by "outsiders" are women, who have no business attending sporting events, especially at Eton or other all-male arenas. Women were considered a nuisance at these events, distracting the athletes and demeaning the sport. Theater critics and attendees also viewed the female audience member as a nuisance: especially the matinée girl or gallery girl. A recent addition to the Victorian theater world, she was usually a young woman between the ages of fourteen and twenty who stalked back-stage doors. It was an exciting time for these women, who freely attended the theater without a male escort. Being a matinée girl seemed to have a special charge. Former matinée girl Molly Hughes recollects, "it was like tasting blood, or some exciting drug, the pleasure was so delightful" (403). This display of freedom and desire perplexed and fascinated the press, which declared these young women a new species.

Historian Susan Torrey Barstow, whose article, ““Hedda Is All of Us”” Late-Victorian Woman at the Matinee,” examines the role theater audiences had on the women’s rights movement comments that, “Contemporary reviewers dubbed this new species of spectator the ‘matinée girl’ and she caused much more of a stir than her older counterpart. If the leisured lady was a source of trouble fascination, the matinée girl provoked considerable alarm” (392).

The original goal of the matinée was to provide Wednesday afternoon performances for the upper class, the only people who had the luxury of an idle afternoon. However, between 1890 and 1914, audiences changed due to increased leisure time and a growing middle class. The matinées proved a success and Saturday afternoons were added. Among those groups with more time and liberty were women, who started to attend the theater without men. Female audience members were viewed by “serious theater-goers” as silly dilettantes. Critics and reviewers bemoaned the presence of women and their bad theater habits. In the missive *Pastiche and Prejudice*, drama critic Arthur Bingham Walkey (1855-1926) despaired of the female. He blamed women for the demise of the theater, due to their wearing of hats, their focus on fashion, and their chocolate obsession. In a chapter called “The Chocolate Drama” he quips, “It has been said that women go to church for the sake of the *hims*, but they go to the theater for the sake of chocolates” (71).

But theater managers and business-savvy actors realized a potential market, and started putting on matinées that featured popular male performers, creating the matinée idol. Some actors saw this potential very early, such as Charles Wyndham who redefined his career to cater to such roles. Actor Anthony Curtis recalls “Wyndham showed

much self-knowledge and contributed materially to the evolution of the matinée idol when in that year (1889) he revived the costume drama *David Garrick*” (22). This, “allowed Wyndham to graduate from bustling philanderer to romantic idol, and the Criterion [theater] to be transformed from an English *palais-royale* to a rendez-vous for leisured ladies” (22), and from this idea emerged the matinée idol and the matinée girl.

The matinée girl (also called gallery girl) represented a new type of adolescent, far more interested in the actor than the play. These young women, often derided in the press for their hysteria or quiet gawking, caused quite a stir. Unaccompanied girls who worshipped actors, waiting for a glimpse or some sort of acknowledgement discomfited theater audiences. The *Reporters Nosegay* warns, “There is another species of stage-door habitués, however, possessing far more interest, in the persons of matinee girls” (Bacon np). They were seen, as Barstow wrote, like a new species. And in a way they were. Never before had women been allowed such independence and never had there been so much leisure time, another new concept that emerged during the nineteenth-century due to automation and the industrial revolution. More leisure time and a growing middle-class changed theater audiences from the privileged upper class to a more democratic mix. The matinée audiences, “almost by definition . . . were leisure audiences, made up of non-working women, old people, and adolescents, mainly girls” (Barstow 390).

This type of behavior, relatively unknown, made people uneasy. The actor Lewis Waller did not enjoy his ardent admirers. “Rather it was said to his resentment [that] he attracted a band of worshipping gallery girls. But they were all aflame on his first nights. The idolatry was hysterical” (Curtis 33). Often, actors who gathered such fans received less than favorable reviews. For example, Stanley Broughton Tall, a critic, remarks that

the idol may not act well “but he is well-versed in lovemaking and swordplay, so the matinée girls munched their chocolate creams and applauded plenteously” (44). British dramatist and critic Saint John Ervine chided, “it is remarkable to observe how enthusiastic a first night Gallery of hysterical young women will become over a young person who would be better employed in selling programs than in acting” (Grein, J.T., “The World of the Theater” 10). Being a matinée idol could lessen an actor’s professional reputation and prestige.

But, the “Idol” had *something*, a special charisma that made girls swoon and want more. Similar to Eugen Sandow’s photographs, “images of desired matinée idols could be collected, exchanged and ‘possessed’ by their adoring fans” (Haldane-Lawrence 50). Antony Curtis explains the allure of the idol posing, “There are various contributions to the making of an idol. Most important of course is a mysterious gift known as star quality when the owner takes the stage and retains the eyes of the audience” (32). The gaze of the audience creates the idol.

And when Goldhill writes of the audience’s reception to Hylas, arguing, “in the case of Waterhouse’s *Hylas and the Nymphs*, we see it is specifically as a space and engagement for the desire of the viewer— a desire conceptualized through contemporary frames of reference,” (170) I propose that it is the gaze of the nymphs, quietly admiring Hylas, in a way that could be viewed as either menacing or innocent, that make it a contemporary statement.

The Look of Desire

Waterhouse's use of the gaze is very different from other representations of the story. *Hylas and the Nymphs* has an established tradition in art, dating back to ancient mosaics and frescoes found in Rome and Pompeii. It is quite possible that Waterhouse viewed the fresco *Hylas Attacked by Nymphs* (Figure 30) during his Roman travels. Through his studies at the Academy Waterhouse would have been aware of William Etty's *Hylas and the Water Nymphs* (1833) (Figure 31) and the neoclassical sculpture by John Gibson, *Hylas Surprised by the Naiads* (1837) (Figure 32). Similarities in the basic iconography occur, such as an outdoor setting usually by water, the inclusion of Hylas' ewer, and Hylas' youthful body. The motif of Hylas's fear and panic surrounding his abduction is evoked in all three versions. The nymphs overpower Hylas. It is not their beauty which captures but their strength.

But in Waterhouse's, Hylas does not register fear. A sense of serenity or trepidation cloaks the scene. Hylas's reaction is unknown because his face turns from the viewer to meet the eyes of the nymphs. Their gaze holds Hylas's attention and focuses the audience on their desire. This is what sets Waterhouse's works apart from the others, and makes it unnerving yet appealing. Art writer Simon Pöe, responding to its appearance in a 2009 exhibit remarked, "But I did like the painting's sense of danger: the urgency of the foreground nymphs' feathery caresses and the hungry looks of those behind them that hint at appetites stranger and scarier than lust" (95).

Of course, mermaids, nymphs, sirens and other aquatic females were a common trope for nineteenth-century artists, and audiences were accustomed to equating these creatures with prostitutes or other "fallen women" with "unnatural" sexual appetites.

Waterhouse does not stray from that cultural belief, but he does play gender roles of dominance and desire through the use of a female gaze that differs from his contemporaries. For comparison I have chosen similar works by his peers Frederic Leighton, Edward Burne-Jones, and Henrietta Rae. These were known works by artists which Waterhouse and the average audience would have been familiar. Although Kerns claims that, “The Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones and two neo-classical painters Frederick Leighton and John William Waterhouse created a gallery of open-eyed seductresses triumphing over weak-eyed men” (173), I argue that Waterhouse is the only one that utilized the female gaze as the ultimate tool of power and not the female body.

For example, in Leighton’s *Fisherman and the Siren* (1858) (Figure 33), the siren overpowers the fisherman physically. Kerns, almost arguing against his prior point, writes, “when he [Leighton] depicted seductive women with men, the ocular imbalance between the sexes was pronounced. In the *Fisherman and The Siren* the fisherman’s gaze is more frontal than the sirens, whose desirous open eyes are posed out of view” (173). If they are hidden, how do we know they are open and desirous? Leighton chooses to portray desire through the physicality of the siren’s arching body and not the gaze. As Art historian Lynda Nead suggests, “the impact and power of the painting lie elsewhere, however, in the depiction of the passages of physical contact, in which the pale body of the siren is pressed relentlessly and unforgivingly against the golden skin of her victim” (70). We cannot see her eyes and the eyes of the sailor are closed. There is no gaze. The seduction (and destruction) is done physically.

The same is true in Edward Burne-Jones's, *The Depths of The Sea*² (1885) (Figure 34) where a sea nymph or mermaid, carries her prize, a drowned sailor, down to her watery lair. Here, as in Leighton's painting, the female body overwhelms and engulfs the male. And though much has been written about her elfish, enigmatic expression, with its Leonardoesque smile, it is her muscular, androgynous form that carries the male down to his doom. The mermaid looks out with an expression of triumph. She is to be admired and praised for her capture. Suzanne Fagence Cooper, a specialist in Victorian art, posits that the mermaid's desire has been met, and she looks at the viewer "expecting us to admire her cunning and beauty" (195). Her gaze directs the viewer to admire her and not the male. This differs from Waterhouse's works where the female gaze directs the viewer to the male figure.

A 1909 version of *Hylas and the Nymphs* (Figure 35) sumptuously painted by the artist Henrietta Rae, who studied at the Royal Academy, is clearly influenced by Waterhouse. But her Hylas seems quite able to fend off the pretty ladies who flirt and flit. The overall effect, one of frippery on a summer's day, lacks a sense of danger. While all three deals with the subject of watery deaths and female desire, it is French artist Jules-Eugène Lenepveu's, *Hylas Attiré par les Nymphes* (1863) (Figure 36) that resounds the most with Waterhouse. Lenepveu's *Hylas*, like Waterhouse's, dons a vibrant blue garment tied with a red sash. A gathering of nymphs, emerge from the water and grasses to surround Hylas. Lenepveu's nymphs are bold and one crooks her finger around Hylas' belt, giving her more leverage. Hylas appears intrigued, even content, to allow the

2. *Depths of the Sea* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1885, the year Waterhouse and Burne-Jones were elected as members. It was the only painting Burne-Jones ever exhibited at the Academy.

nymphs to drag him towards unknown pleasure. Solomon-Godeau sees Lenepveu's *Hylas and the Nymphs* as an eighteenth-century French twist on the tale, which presents a contemporary view. According to Solomon-Godeau, Lenepveu:

Provides an instructive contrast to these earlier versions and graphically illustrates how a given motif is transformed when the erotic locus shifts from a masculine to a feminine protagonist. . . . the nymph has been transformed into a second Empire tart and Hylas has become her hapless foil. The erotic focus of the myth has been reversed into familiar and modern terms (196).

A similar argument could be extended to Waterhouse's painting. Some reviewers questioned a similar decadence and wondered if Hylas' fate was really so awful. More importantly, as Goldhill posits, this painting represents female desire, a desire blatantly presented in the guise of the nymphs. Painted in 1896, during the ascent of both the *matinée* girl and the *matinée* idol, *Hylas and the Nymphs* captures the anxiety that people felt over the *matinée* girl.

The tension, "in the responses to the painting between the looming sexual violence, and the winsomeness of the girls" (169) that Goldhill observes, correlates with the tensions over the *matinée* girl. Harold Acton Vivian, author of *The Theatrical Primer* portrays her as silly, and a bit odd, writing, "Oh! See the Lady crying. She is very young to be tearful. She is a *Matinée* girl. Why does she cry? Is it because the leading man has had his hair cut. She wanted a lock of his lovely hair to stuff a cushion with" (34). *Ladies Home Journal* editor Edward Bok lectures, "it is enough to make a man burn with shame and indignation to see hundreds of young girls sitting in the theater, and, with open mouths, literally drinking in remarks in conversation to which no young girl in her teens should listen" (16).

The nymphs and the *matinée* girl both openly stare at the objects of their desire, eschewing all societal norms. *Matinée* girls do not speak to their idols preferring fantasy to reality, as in, “he was a figure to be seen and admired, an unobtainable object of desire, inhabiting a sphere of escape and fantasy” (Haldane-Lawence 50). Former *matinée* idol Charles Cherry asks, “What happened to the young girls who were transported into a silent dream of romantic hope?” (290), calling them “secret worshippers” (290) who “regarded [their idol] with reverence and silent awe” (290).

Waterhouse’s nymphs stare in awe at Hylas’ strange beauty. Though they touch him, present him with gifts, and tug at his garment, a timid hesitation is present. They worship Hylas and act like *matinée* girls. One description of the *matinée* girl sounds very much like a Waterhouse nymph, “She is a fascinating creature, this winsome *matinée* girl; a half-child on the borderland of womanhood, with the charm of both, and the whims and contradictions that make the feminine so irresistible” (“Summer Wardrobe of the Matinee Girl” xvii). And this is what Victorian/Edwardian audiences would recognize and find intriguing.

Waterhouse and the Theater

Relating Waterhouse to the theater has its difficulties, as there is no direct link between Waterhouse and any performance, but scholars and contemporaries have noted the theatricality in his work. Peter Trippi sees Waterhouse’s interest in the theater beginning with *The Magic Circle* (1886) (Figure 37), which “exemplifies Waterhouse’s growing theatricality” (*Waterhouse* 77)³.

3. I propose Waterhouse’s interest in the theater is seen earlier in *The Remorse of Nero*. Theatrical connections can be made through Racine’s *Britannicus* and Delacroix’s portrait of the actor Talma in the role of Nero, as discussed previously in Chapter 2.

The costume drama elements of Waterhouse's *The Magic Circle* provoked *Punch* illustrator Henry Furniss to create a spoof of the painting, incorporating actress Sarah Bernhardt into the scene. The caption reads "Sarah B. in a New Piece. A big spooney scene" (Trippi 78). Waterhouse's *Circe Indivisia* (1892) (Figure 38) seems influenced by John Singer Sargent's portrait of *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth* (1889) (Figure 39). Both contain powerful, destructive women, standing in column like fashion, invoking unseen forces, and "feature brilliant hues and crazed intensity inspired by West End theater (117). There is also some speculation, first presented by Anthony Hobson, that Waterhouse's wife, Esther Kenworthy, worked as a theater critic. This claim has not been substantiated, other than by Hobson.

Art on Stage: Tableaux Vivants and Living Pictures

A crossover between high art and theater would have been very familiar to Victorian and Edwardian audience. Art historian Rosemary Barrow points out, "Significantly, these new entertainments mediated antiquity not from classical sources, but from academic painting. The worlds of theatre and art interacted" (209). During this time, from the 1890s and into the 1900s, *Tableaux Vivants*, also known as Living Pictures or *Poses Plastiques* regained their popularity and moved from the lower class musical halls to more upscale theaters such as the Palace Theater. Widely popular, these performances relied on men and women (mostly women) to recreate famous paintings and sculptures on stage. Pink or flesh colored body stockings, worn by the models, created the illusion of nudity, providing a sculptural and smooth appearance to the body. Special effects and lighting tricks elevated the genre from salacious, low-class peep show into elevated art-themed performances.

Like Sandow's show, which featured flesh turned into marble, Living Pictures got away with a plethora of nudity due to the re-creation of Classical and neoclassical artworks. Theater historian Barry Faulks explains, "In keeping with an overwhelming popular success, the Living Pictures had it both ways: it was both a 'contained' display of aesthetic value, and an incitement to sexual reverie" (159). The paintings of Leighton and Alma-Tadema were frequently featured. Faulk writes, "living statuary at the Palace Theater also activated the link between tableaux vivants and the high culture discourse of Royal Academy painting" (157). While research has not linked Waterhouse's works to any Living Pictures or tableaux vivants, Barrow notes that his type of painting influenced the theater:

Constructions of the classical past in theatre and painting shared specific visual conventions. Images of antiquity - Lawrence Alma Tadema's *The Rose of Heliogabalus* (1888), Frederic Leighton's *Flaming June* (1895), and J. W. Waterhouse's *Hylas and the Nymphs* (1896) . . . with idealized nudes deriving from sculptural prototypes (218).

The Male Body: Symbol of the Ideal or Object of Desire

Of course, as Hatt argued earlier, the male figure, even if posing half-naked on a music-hall stage, represented an ideal, something to admire. The male body was safe from censorship and morality debates. Haldane-Lawrence notes:

The homoerotic inferences of semi-naked male Hellenistic poses on the music hall stage and more particularly, their effect on women, were questions largely ignored in the cleanup campaigns of the 1890s. Their vigilantes were more concerned with the effect of female nudity on men in the audience than with moral questions posed by masculine nakedness" (49).

But, these men *did* have an effect, and this is evident in the rise of the male body on display throughout the nineteenth century.

When architect, archaeologist, and designer Edward William Godwin shortened

actor Wilson Barrett's toga (1900) (Figure 40), to be more historically accurate, it happened to bare Barrett's legs, which were greatly admired. And this is why I agree with Barrow's statement that, "Photographs of Sandow were reproduced in bodybuilding magazines in a spirit of self-improvement, but the classicized male body, like the female was implicitly an erotic object" (216). Waterhouse's contemporary, poet and journalist, Arthur Symons (1865-1945) debated (among others) in the *New Review* about the indecency of Living Picture shows. Symons proposes:

If the female figure is supposed to be indecent, why is not the male figure indecent also? We are assured that the "baser passions" of the male part of an audience are likely to be "inflamed" by the sight of the outline of the female figure. Are "the baser passions" then, of the female audience likely to be inflamed by the sight of the outline of the male figure? (464).

Finally, Joseph Kestner connects this cultural shift directly to the visual arts in his *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*. He comments that the representation of males in nineteenth-century British iconography was decisive in the formation of ideologies about masculinity arguing, "The representation of the male on canvas means that the male and the body become the spectacle" (24). And as Haldane-Lawrence posits "it argues that this objectification of masculine glamour was largely engendered by the emerging freedoms for women" (45). As a result of this significant cultural shift, the idea that the male body was somehow more Classical and therefore elevated to a higher, sexless sphere, was challenged.

But, was the male nude ever really seen only as the representation of an ideal? Johann Winckelmann writings on Greek and Roman statuary have raised eyebrows. Winckelmann even suggests that the Apollo Belvedere should be appreciated for its erotic value. Women especially should see it since they are sexually attracted to the male

body. Wincklemann recommends, “Women should come and see it and say . . . whether all images they have formed of the beauty of men are not much inferior to what this statue presents to them” (Potts123). In summation Potts proposes, “It is as if the imagined spectator needs to be a woman for the statue to be conceived as an object of desire” (123). While Wincklemann may be applauded for encouraging women to look at art and not be afraid of their reactions, the underlying current is that somehow women cannot look at art objectively.

As we look at Waterhouse’s mythical paintings of young, beautiful boys, who have no function other than to display their youth and looks, the viewer is confronted with themes of sexual desire and the male as a sex object, through the eyes of a woman. Clearly, the female figures are objects of desire for Waterhouse’s intended audience but the male body gains focus under the gaze of the female. Painted in a time when the male body became a viable commodity, his use of the gaze of adolescent females longing for sculptural boys with *matinée* idol looks, can be read as a response to the new female adulation. These works question the notion that the male form is of a higher moral plane than the female but reinforce the idea that a woman’s scopic desire is dangerous. They are a warning for men to not fall into this trap, which ends badly for the male. Under the watchful gaze of the nymph or the *matinée* girl, the young male is objectified and his power is gone, even if he is still so pretty.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

The Beautiful Boy

“The more beautiful the boy the less likely he is to survive” writes Germaine Greer (156). The poignancy of this statement is made true by the many representations in art of dying boys. Their vulnerability adds to the tragedy. It represents the loss of life, innocence, potential, and beauty. And the passing of young boys also represents the notion of time fleeting, and the end of those glorious few years in a boy’s life where he has the physical and mental capabilities to explore his world, testing his strength and character, before the responsibilities of manhood take hold. Hylas, Narcissus, and Adonis exemplify this shining moment. All three are adored and desired by men and women. And, as the myths dictate, they enjoy a sort of freedom that adults do not. Of course, Hylas and Adonis are technically kidnap victims, but neither one seems affected by this. Like Narcissus, they explore, hunt, and love or not love, as they please. It is a rather blissful existence.

Waterhouse paints these youths at the height of their existence, moments before their deaths.⁴ Females with expressions of longing or desire watch the men. But what do

4. Although *The Awakening of Adonis* is commonly considered to be a depiction of Adonis’ return to Aphrodite, I argue in my essay, “‘A beautiful corpse, as it were sleeping’: John William Waterhouse’s *Awakening of Adonis* and Bion’s *Lament for Adonis*,” published in *The Review of The Pre-Raphaelite Society* (spring 2016), that it could also portray Adonis’s death. I posit that Waterhouse’s title refers to the line “Wake yet a while, Adonis, oh but once, that I may kiss you now for the last time” from Bion’s *Lament for Adonis* as partly translated by Shelly in 1829.

they desire? Is it just sexual or is it something deeper? Sketchley views their gaze as a desire for a soul, or humanity, calling them, “soul-less women creatures, longing for union with the human substance of which they are, as it were, the shadows” (23).

Sketchley’s observation matches that of historian Kevin Goddard who explains the gaze as a desire for completeness:

The gaze becomes, therefore, the expression of the ideal each gender holds for the other and for itself. It is not the image of actual difference or similarity, the rather the expression of the desired idea the individual hopes to attain or to join with in the hope of being made complete” (“Looks Maketh the Man” 31).

And for Waterhouse’s canon, in which a desire for the other, in an imagined, yet never quite achieved notion of a sublime and perfect union, remains a constant, this is a very true observation.

Yet, there is more to their gaze. I am not saying that Waterhouse paints salacious or overtly sexual themes; that would be untrue. I believe that the female gaze reflects a desire for something that the male has, and she does not. Perhaps it is sexual, but Waterhouse’s works may also be viewed as women’s longing for freedom and an identity. Does Echo, who has been reduced to a mere copyist of words, envy Narcissus’ confidence? Do the nymphs, enclosed in their watery, feminine world long for Hylas’ freedom? And does Aphrodite, although the goddess of love and beauty, look at Adonis’s form with just a hint of jealousy, knowing that male beauty is more revered? These are unanswerable questions, but worth pondering as we examine Waterhouse’s works painted during the time of Suffragettes and women’s emancipation.

Joseph Kestner posits that painters used women as symbols for contemporary, anti-women issues:

Classical-subject painters reacted to political and legal changes by representing them in icons. It is not satisfactory to claim that these images arose simply to enable artists to present the female nude. Most artists, and many in the viewing public, were familiar with the details of these legends. The subtext in such canvases is gynophobic (50).

But instead of gynophobic, a term I hesitate to use to describe Waterhouse, I view Waterhouse's works as a sort of detached observation of society glossed over with the imagination of poetry and myth. Woods writes, "Waterhouse's nymphs and goddesses are real, flesh-and-blood people" (224) who could very well symbolize, as Kestner asserts, the growing fear among men of possible female equality or dominance. And in the ever-increasing democratic culture of the nineteenth century, women started to gain entrance into male-dominated enclaves and in the ever-expanding visual culture of the nineteenth-century the role of the female gaze and the female body became a public debate, known as "The Nudity Debate."

Nudity Debates, Female Artists, and the Double Standard

Tate curator Alison Smith, who writes extensively on this subject, notes that, "In 1885 appreciation of the nude was still seen to require a specialist perception, even though the audience for art become more democratic" ("The British Matron" 217). Some viewers, usually upper-middle class males with an interest in fine art, felt uncomfortable with women viewing nudes. One letter, published in *The Times*, under the pseudonym "A British Matron"⁵ pleaded against the display of nudity. This letter sparked a heated

5. The original British Matron was John Callcott Horsley, a Royal Academician, who protested against the nude. Others who wrote in favor in Horsley's views would adopt the name.

discussion between those who saw the nude form as immoral and harmful to observe and those who saw nudity as necessary to art and an expression of truth. But it was not the male form that worried the conservative element; it was the female form. Michael Hatt observes:

It was the female body and its dangerous pleasures that challenged public morals and sullied public space; it was the female body, after all that connoted sexuality, as is only too plainly evidenced by the string of Pandoras, sirens, mermaids, sphinxes, and other *femmes fatales* that lined the walls of galleries (*Physical Culture* 241).

While Waterhouse's works fit well within the above examples, reinforcing the idea that only "unnatural" women enjoyed sex or sought power, more important here is the discussion of the female gaze. The female viewer, it seems caused shame and endless embarrassment, both to herself and society at large. The British Matron, incensed at the amount of female nudity and its impact on the female audience at a Royal Academy exhibit, exclaimed, "a modest woman may not stand hanging on the arm of the father, brother, lover without a *burning sense of shame*" ("A Woman's Plea" 10). Another commentator (also a "Matron"), appalled at the *lack* of shame wrote:

I visited the Royal Academy recently in company with my husband and was shocked, not only at the 'nudities' referred to, but at the ease and apparent nonchalant with which the young girls, evidently of the higher classes of society, regarding the same side by side with men and boys (Goldhill 151).

A similar thought process can be found at the theater as well. Charles Bacon of

Reporter's Nosegay remarks:

The eccentricities of the callow youths who haunt the stage doors of the theatres are well known. Most of them are regarded as harmless, and if they get any enjoyment out of ogling chorus girls as they leave the theatres it is nobody's business. There is another species of stage-door habitués, however, possessing far more interest, in the persons of matinée girls. Their excitement is intense, and occasionally almost hysterical (np).

Both Bacon and The Matron believe that the male gaze, whether enjoying edification at art museum or “ogling chorus girls” at the matinée understood correct propriety. The gaze of the female, just like her physical form, is somehow naturally corrupt and lesser than the male’s. An 1894 poem published in *Music Hall and Theatre Review*, and reprinted by Faulks, “enforces a double standard for scopic pleasure, patronizing women in search of visual enjoyment” (181):

Oh, dear, how do ladies did hustle to see
The Perfect man pose at his great matinee; . . .
The ladies from most of our Art Schools were there
The “old” and “homely,” the young and the fair . . .
For nearly one hour they sat and they gazed
At Sadow’s nude figure and gushingly praised
His form and his muscles, his curls and face,
His curves and his outlines, his ease and his grace,
And vowed it was, oh! such an artistic sight,
They could linger with pleasure there night after night,
And so when the “horrid old curtain” came down
Each lady declared with a very deep frown
She thought the performances was really too short
They did not see half the “art pictures” they ought (181).

The above poem specifically chides female artists, who were often viewed with suspicion. The British Matron warns, “Women artists as yet seem content to shame their sex by representations of female nudity; it needs but pictures of unclothed men, true to life, executed by the same skillful hands, to complete the degradation of our galleries” (10). This mindset was just one of the many reasons which deemed women artists inferior, especially at The Royal Academy.⁶

The Academy struggled with women entering their men-only enclave, even though two of its founders, in 1768, were the artists Angelika Kauffmann and Mary

6. Little is known about Waterhouse’s instruction at the Academy and we do not know his opinions on female artists. We do know that Waterhouse’s wife, Esther Kenworthy Waterhouse, an artist, exhibited her paintings at the Academy and other galleries. She stopped exhibiting in 1890 for unknown reasons.

Moser. In 1860, nearly one hundred years later, Laura Hereford, the first female student, entered the Academy. Other women soon followed, despite limitations on what they could study. While the Slade School allowed women to attend life classes by 1871, the Academy did not grant women that privilege until 1893. The privilege came with a series of “carefully stipulated precautions to comply with standards of decency” (Hutchison 127). These standards, listed in the *Royal Annual Report of 1893* read as follows:

It shall be optional for Visitors in the Painting School to set the male model undraped, except about the loins, to the class of female students. The drapery to be worn by the model to consist of ordinary bathing drawers, and a cloth of light material 9 feet long by 3 feet wide, which shall be wound round the loins over the drawers, passed between the legs and tucked in over the waistband; and finally a thin leather strap shall be fastened round the loins in order to ensure that the cloth keep its place (128).

These standards seem somewhat ridiculous but for the inherently conservative Academy this was progress. The Academy had a low opinion of life classes, even for the men.

Jason Edwards explains:

At the Royal Academy, male students spent literally years drawing from plaster casts of famous antique and Renaissance figures, initially working with fragments of torsos, hands, feet and heads, this was followed by a prolonged period drawing more or less entire sculpted figures, before finally progressing to the life model which was nevertheless always to be drawn with neoclassical ideas in mind” (np).

Waterhouse’s mythical paintings, with their loosely draped figures and formal concerns with the human figure may indicate that Waterhouse attended life classes after 1890, when his art took such a turn. Also, he began to paint semi-nude males and females together after the nudity debates of 1885 and the rise of New Sculpture. New Sculpture, which celebrated the male form at a time when the female form was under scrutiny, almost acts a counter-move to all the hype about female nudity. In the paintings under

discussion, the muscular male (carefully draped), ideal in his iconic youthful beauty, is contrasted against the more exposed, hypotonic female. He does not lust. The women do. They are symbolic of baser desires. Waterhouse's works which stress the beauty of the male and the sexuality of the female could be positioned within the concerns of New Sculpture and the morality debates.

Beautiful Resonance

Waterhouse is considered an aesthetic painter, concerned more with beauty than morality. He looks to poetical inspiration and longs for the beauty of an imagined past. Sketchley muses, "therein lies the source of the tender vividness of his art, its power to renew for modern sight and imagination a beauty lost from the common apprehension of life" (18). But, as Kestner concludes, "Nevertheless, as more than one critic recognized, his art is profoundly intellectual and psychological, probing the 'subliminal' to present the complex resonance of male/female roles" (*Mythology* 303). And resonance describes what Waterhouse's work evoked in the viewer. Eton-like boys and pale-skinned English Roses inhabit a landscape that is both fantastical and familiar. This familiarity makes the paintings feel more real and contemporary. Sketchley views this as one of Waterhouse's strengths, commenting:

As a space of well-blended colour any of these paintings would be pleasurable. But the pleasure they can give is something more than that. It is the result not only of a pattern, but the images of fair persons and things, and, still further, of the ideas symbolized in these forms (18).

And these forms, as Kestner posits, could symbolize the impact of woman's emancipation. And a woman's access to the male form, whether for pleasure, education, admiration, or commerce, expanded during Waterhouse's lifetime.

Finally, it is somewhat poignant, and worthy of more analysis, that Waterhouse's

last painting *A Tale from The Decameron* (1916) (Figure 41) re-visits the theme of the female spectator, but balance has been achieved. Here, in the safe-haven of a Florentine garden, male troubadours entertain a group of women. The parties all wear sumptuous clothes, and all are equally engaged. Harmony is symbolized through the inclusion of musical instruments. A happy couple, watch from a distance. The men are seated slightly higher than the females, who actively listen (except for one, who idly picks a flower). All appear different and with distinct personalities. They are natural women. It is not an image of dangerous or unrequited desire. All appears lovely and peaceful. However, as Boccaccio's tales unfold, The Plague rages outside the garden gates, love and death again intertwined.

The world of John William Waterhouse is a fantastical one filled with beauty, love, danger, and magic. His women enchant and beguile us, but focusing on the male figure in Waterhouse's works creates a new lens for analysis. Goldhill's statement that, "Waterhouse's paintings have been underestimated: they explore male desire in a more provocative way than his reputation as a pious, wholesome Victorian suggests" (183) demonstrates the need for more research into Waterhouse's boys.

My theory that Waterhouse's paintings *Hylas and the Nymphs*, *Echo and Narcissus*, and the *Awakening of Adonis* reflect the changes in women's rights and the changing status of the male nude from icon to sex object retains the established scholarship on Waterhouse's fascination with a woman's power, but incorporates other factors such as the theater, New Sculpture, and the female gaze. These provide a cultural context to explore the importance of the pretty boys on display in Waterhouse's paintings and the women who desire them.

Figures

Figure 1: John William Waterhouse. *The Death of Cocles*, 1856. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Pictify*, pictify.saatchigallery.com.



Figure 2: John William Waterhouse. *Sleep and His Half-Brother Death*, 1874. Oil on canvas. private collection. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org



Figure 3: *Endymion Sleeping on Mt. Latmos*. Roman, second century. Marble, British Museum, London. Image courtesy of ©Trustees of the British Museum.



Figure 4: John William Waterhouse. Sketch of a Head, c. 1874. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Author photo.



Figure 5. John William Waterhouse. *Awakening of Adonis*, 1900. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.

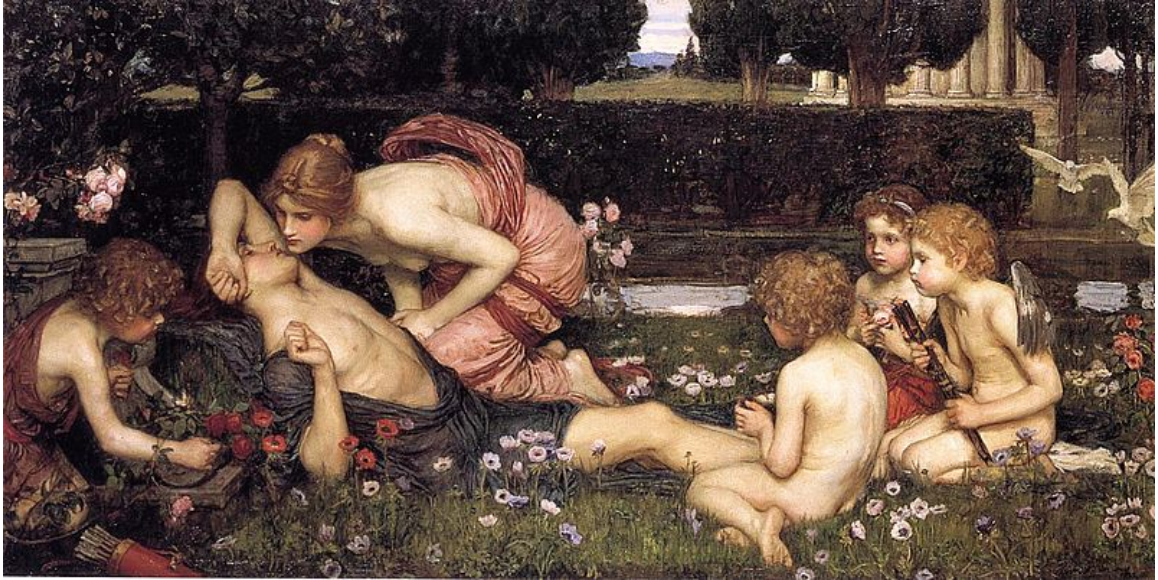


Figure 6: John William Waterhouse. *Apollo and Daphne*, 1908. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 7: John William Waterhouse. *The Annunciation*, 1914. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.

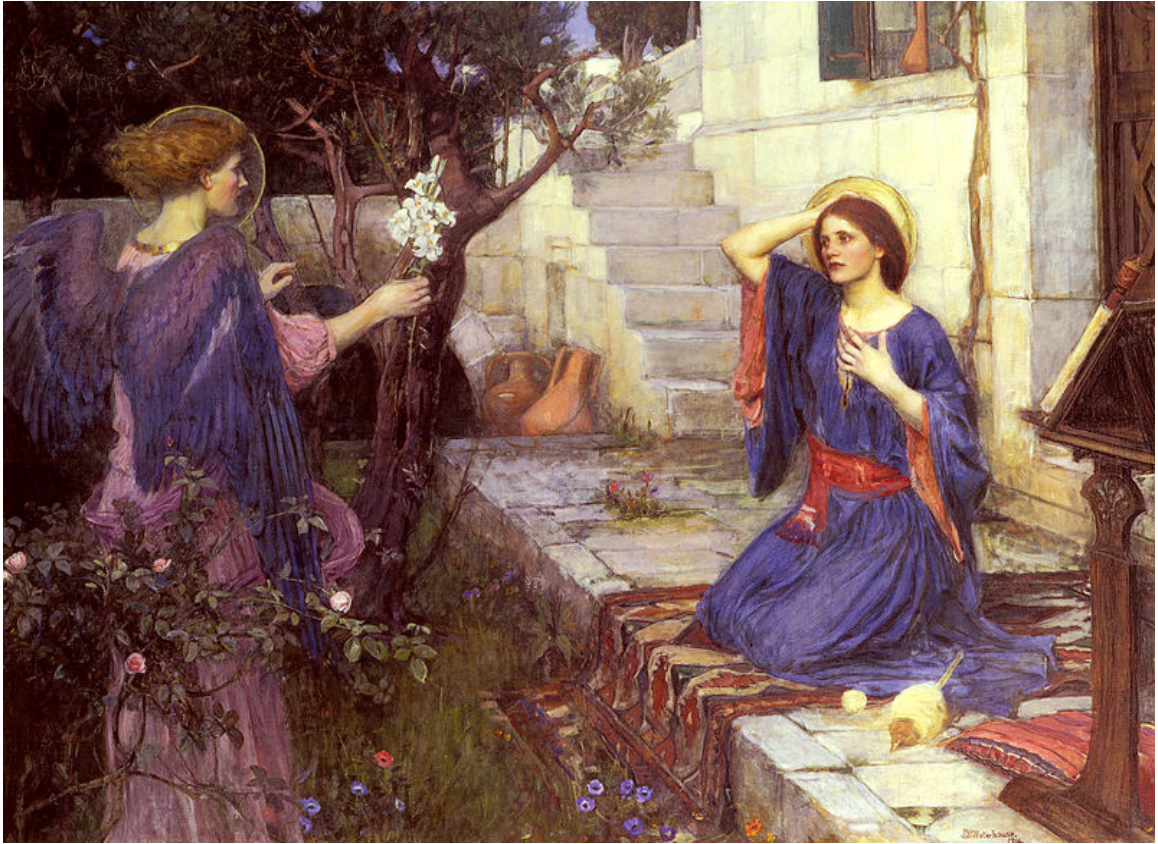


Figure 8: John William Waterhouse. *A Sick Child Brought Into The Temple of Aesculapius*, 1877. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Wikimedia*, [wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_William_Waterhouse_-_A_Sick_Child_Brought_Into_The_Temple_of_Aesculapius.jpg).



Figure 9. Frederic Leighton. *And The Sea Gives Up Its Dead Which Were In It*, 1892. Oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London. Tate.org.uk.



Figure 10: John William Waterhouse. *The Remorse Of Nero After The Murder Of His Mother*, 1878. Oil on canvas, private collection. [Wikimedia, wikimedia.org](https://www.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_William_Waterhouse_-_The_Remorse_of_Nero_After_the_Murder_of_His_Mother.jpg).



Figure 11: Eugene Delacroix. *Talma as Nero in Britannicus by Racine*, 1852. Oil on canvas, Academie Française. Paris. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 12: John William Waterhouse. *The Favourites of the Emperor Honorius*, 1883.

Oil on canvas, South Australian Museum, Adelaide. *Wikimedia*, commons.

[wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_William_Waterhouse_-_The_Favourites_of_the_Emperor_Honorius.jpg).



Figure 13. John William Waterhouse. *Hylas and the Nymphs*, 1896. Oil on canvas,
Manchester City Art Gallery. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 14. John William Waterhouse. *Echo and Narcissus*, 1903. Oil on canvas, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 15: John William Waterhouse. *Ulysses and the Sirens*, 1891. Oil on canvas,
National Gallery of Victoria. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 16. John William Waterhouse. *A Naiad*, 1893. Oil on canvas, private collection.

Wikimedia, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 17: Edward Onslow Ford. *Echo*, 1895. Bronze, Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port
Sunlight. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 18. Frederick William Pomeroy. *Nymph of Loch Awe*, 1897. Marble and onyx, Tate Britain, London. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 19. John William Waterhouse. *A Mermaid*, 1900. Oil on canvas, Royal Academy of Arts, London. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 20. Harry Bates. *Psyche* panel, c. 1889. Bronze, private collection. *The Victorian Web*, victorianweb.org.



Figure 21. Frederic Leighton. *An Athlete Wrestling with a Python*, 1877. Bronze, Tate Britain, London, Tate.org.UK.



Figure 22. Hamo Thornycroft. *The Mower*, 1888-90. Bronze, Tate Britain, London,
Tate.org.UK.



Figure 23. Frederic Leighton. *The Sluggard (An Athlete Awakening from Sleep)*, c.

1890. Bronze statuette, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, vam.ac.uk.

Image courtesy of © Victoria and Albert Museum.



Figure 24. John William Waterhouse. *Cleopatra*, 1888. Oil on canvas, private collection

Wikimedia, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 25. Albert Toft. *Spirit of Contemplation*, 1906. Bronze, Laing Art Gallery,
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. Author photo.



Figure 26. John William Waterhouse. *Lady of Shalott*, 1888. Oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London. Author photo.



Figure 27. John William Waterhouse. Sketch of *Awakening of Adonis*, c. 1900. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Mutual Art*, mutualart.com.



Figure 28. John William Waterhouse. Sketch of a Torso, c.1900. Pencil, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Author photo.



Figure 29. Andre Van Der Weyde, *Eugen Sandow*, 1888. Photograph. *Wikimedia*,
commons.wikimedia.org.

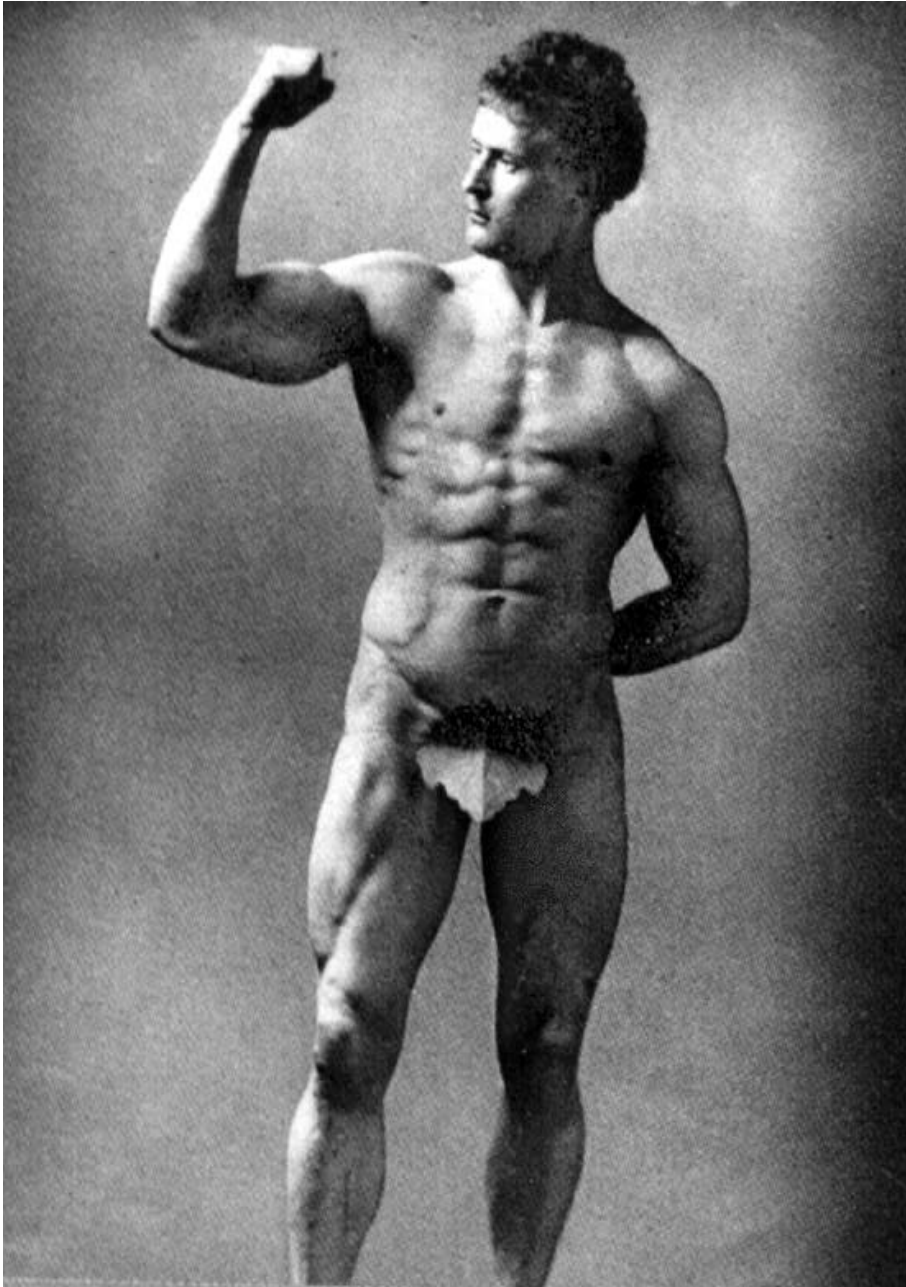


Figure 30. *Hylas Attacked by Nymphs*, early fourth century. Inlay, Polychrome marble with glass paste and mother-of-pearl, Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome. *Harvard VIA*, <http://id.lib.harvard.edu/via/olvwork176856/catalog>



Figure 31: William Etty. *Young Hylas and the Water Nymphs*, 1833. Oil on canvas, Anglesey Abbey, Cambridge. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 32: John Gibson. *Hylas Surprised by the Naiads*, c. 1833. Marble, Tate Britain, London. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 33. Frederic Leighton. *The Fisherman and The Siren*, 1856-58. Oil on canvas, Bristol Museum of Art. [commons.wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frederic_Leighton_-_The_Fisherman_and_the_Siren.jpg).



Figure 34: Edward Burne-Jones. *The Depths of the Sea*, 1887. Watercolor and

Gouache, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge. Harvardartmuseums.org.

Image courtesy of: Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop.



Figure 35. Henrietta Rae. *Hylas and the Water Nymphs*, c.1909. Oil on canvas, private collection. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 36. Jules-Eugène Lenepveau, *Hylas Attiré par les Nymphes*, 1865. Oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 37: John William Waterhouse. *The Magic Circle*, 1886. Oil on canvas, Tate Britain, London. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org



Figure 38. John William Waterhouse. *Circe Indivisia*, 1892. Oil on canvas, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 39. John Singer Sargent. *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth*, 1889. Oil on canvas,
Tate Britain, London. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



Figure 40: Barraud, *Wilson Barrett as Claudian*, 1900. Photograph,
Kentucky Digital Library, kdl.kyvl.org/.



Figure 41. John William Waterhouse. *A Tale from the Decameron*, 1916. Oil on canvas, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. *Wikimedia*, commons.wikimedia.org.



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